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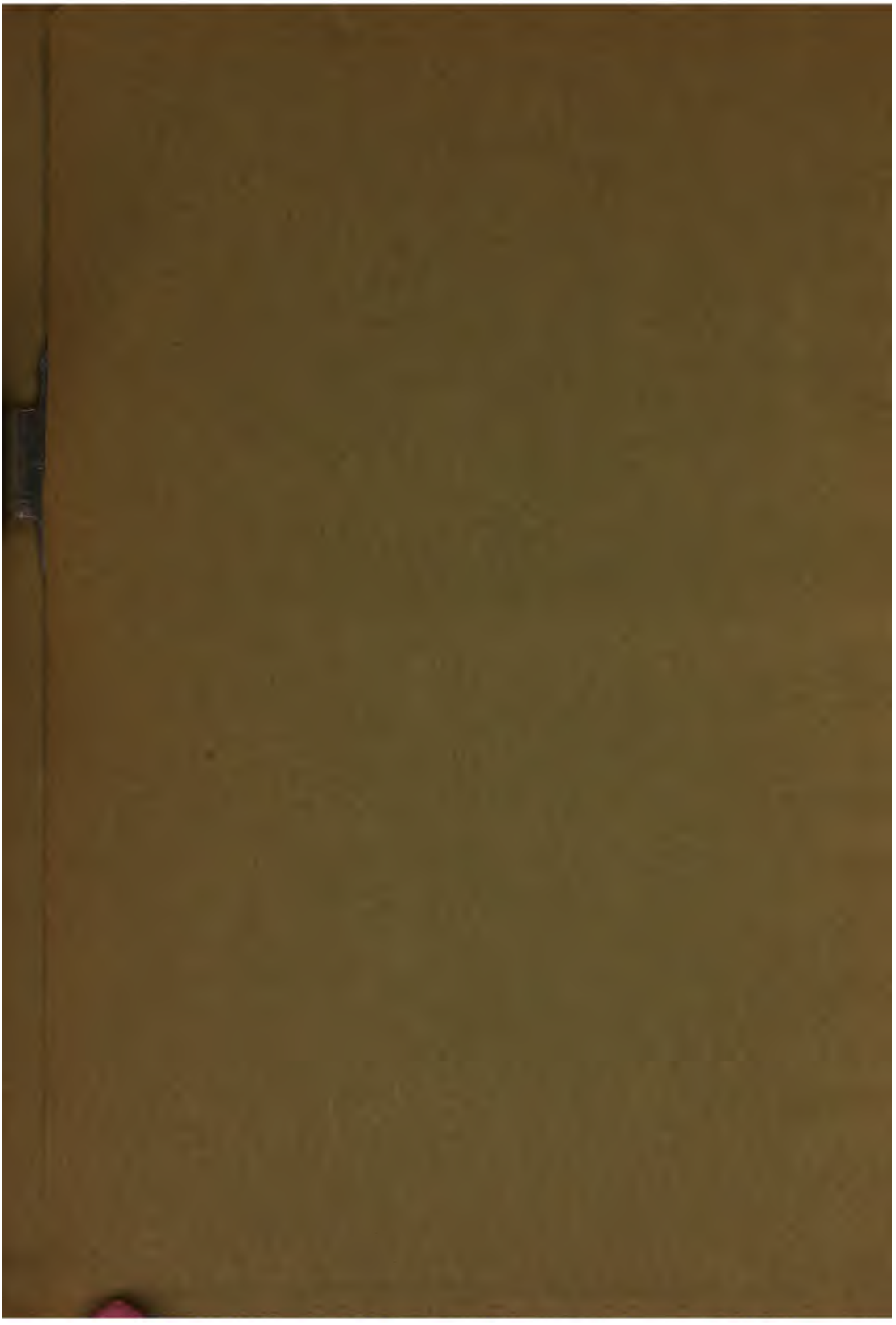

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

OR,

LETTERS FROM DOCTOR COULTER

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

OR, LETTERS FROM DOCTOR COULTER

Edited by Charlotte G. Herbine

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FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN EDITION

I FEEL confident that today the great majority of the thinking world is more or less interested in Occultism. There has never been a time when the thought of inter-communism between the spiritual and the material worlds has brought such comfort to the human mind and heart, and in view of the cataclysm through which this planet has just passed, and the ensuing march of epoch-making events, it is impossible to believe that life is but chance: We must more and more be convinced that the destinies of men as of nations, lie in the hand of God, and that His ministering angels are striving to help us establish a great Brotherhood wherein selfishness, greed and creed may for all time be eliminated. We cannot advance far into the spheres of life and thought, without recognizing that the evolution of the world is as necessary as individual evolution, and that life would be purposeless, were we not thinking and working for those things that help us to get into touch with God, and to know ourselves.

The League of Nations that is advocated today, represents an effort toward unity of soul as well as material force. Those vast numbers of men and women who have paid with their lives for victory in the titanic struggle of the world-war, would not be satisfied if peace were to be

established merely along physical lines and without consideration of the spiritual ends for which they fought.

Dr. Coulter's messages will help those who will read them with an open mind, to make a distinction between the real and the unreal things about us, and I hope all will feel as I do, that in obtaining fuller knowledge of the great gift of life, there is infinite gain in living not only one life, but many.

I am pleased that "The Meeting of the Spheres" is being published by Brentano's in America, where Dr. Coulter and I have many friends.

CHARLOTTE G. HERBINE.

March, 1919.

CONTENTS

PART I

PAGE

FIRST LETTER 1

Time, space, and spheres are thought—Ethereal houses—The language of the spirit—Mankind is ready for understanding—Nothing avails if gained at the expense of others—The Scriptures and continuity of lives—Elijah's re-birth as John the Baptist not considered a solitary instance of continuity—There is no danger for you if your house is cleanly lived in and if you seek communication with highly evolved spirits alone.

SECOND LETTER 17

The meaning of harmony and the necessity for it—All things tell their tale of struggle—Mankind is neither thorough nor practical—Why we of the spirit return to earth and wish to communicate with you—We can help and have helped in every branch of social activity—Souls evolve on the spiritual plane as on the physical—The brotherhood of spirit and of man—Each soul is a world and needs love.

THIRD LETTER 28

Man in the flesh is already benefiting by the influence of man in the spirit—Your chief obstacle is scepticism, and your worst error is to seek us for idle or silly purposes—Your own soul is an instructor for you—We stand consciously in the temple of the living God—The care you should take of your physical houses—After so-called death you are your own judge—Indulgence in grief for the death of others retards their growth—How you can distinguish good spirits from evil, and how you can prepare yourselves for helpful communication with us.

PART II

SOME MESSAGES OF OTHER SPIRITS TO DR. COULTER

FOURTH LETTER 51

Death is but a convulsion of nature—As we enter the physical world unclothed, so we enter the spiritual—An understanding of Harmony banishes all idea of grief—The new life is so natural that many refuse to believe they are dead—Dr. Coulter tells of his last lives on earth, and explains his present mission.

CONTENTS

PAGE

FIFTH LETTER 61

A spirit's message to Dr. Coulter about his sensations on leaving his physical body—First impressions of the world beyond—His meeting with his mother, and her words about the knowledge which prepares for joy—Harmony and sex affinity in the universe—His meeting with his guide, and what he learned from him—The sin that found him out, and the beginning of knowledge—Another message on the same subject from a spirit who had shut himself in—The panorama of the life he had just left—The panorama of episodes in his entire continuity of lives.

SIXTH LETTER 76

A spirit's message to Dr. Coulter about obsession—His grief because of the privation to which his dear ones would be exposed—His successful struggle to gain possession of a body not his own—His family does not recognise him in another body—He is discovered by the relatives of the body, who are strangers to his spirit—He finds the solution to material difficulties, and fulfils his earthly duties as well as he can—Death brings an understanding of his act. A second message on obsession, as told to Dr. Coulter by the spirit of a jealous wife who would not tolerate a successor.

SEVENTH LETTER. 88

A factory girl's message to Dr. Coulter about her experience of death—The message of a wealthy and influential man: he discovers that rule can exist by the power of love alone—The message of the child who was called away: her mother was helped by the fact of having loved—The message of the spirit who, as a woman on earth, had encouraged her nephew in speed-mania.

EIGHTH LETTER 99

The message to Dr. Coulter from the man who looked back five thousand years: The gift of prophecy and its misuse—Morality in olden times—The principle of sex—The advance of machinery and warfare on earth. The message from a man who had made fruitless psychic research while on earth: How men put themselves in the light of their own understanding—Attraction by spiritual mental thought. The message of the spirit who realised that man cannot stand alone: The obligations of parenthood—Man is fitted for the higher plane only after serving worthily on the lower.

CONTENTS

PAGE

NINTH LETTER 108

The life of each day that prepares the life of the future—The three truths on which life is built—The importance of thought in its relation to vibrations—People become personalities through their power to understand and to express—Education or half-education—Men cannot be fed with the same food to produce the same results—The question of saving for a rainy day—Do not condemn, but bring light if you can.

TENTH LETTER 129

The meaning of the continuity of lives—Why spirits wish to return to physical bodies—How a new expression of life begins—You were sent for one real lesson or message at a time—All things must be gained by work on some plane—The drop in the ocean remains a drop but takes on new ideas—Murder and suicide must be expiated in further lives—Some instances among Dr. Coulter's spirit friends—Souls have mates, but if you betray your earth-obligations you are unworthy of your affinity—A story about the power of real love.

ELEVENTH LETTER. A LETTER FROM DR. COULTER GIVEN TO MRS. SCOTT-GATTY 150

New-year greeting: its importance in its retrospective value—The need of love—Man's need of encouragement—The cure of self-importance and the understanding of right and wrong thought.

TWELFTH LETTER 165

Communion of spirits cannot be proved by the physical demonstrations of mediumship—The nature of the messages given by high spirits—How the psychic must prepare for helpful work—The objection of scientists concerning identity—The duty of guides—The five physical senses of man, and the sixth and seventh senses—How spirits can get into communion with men—Attributes and their right understanding—The meaning of numbers, colours, stones, metals, fruits, flowers, animals, and trees, as attributes.

THIRTEENTH LETTER 186

Conditions of etheric life—Heaven and hell are conditions, but exist in some spheres rather than in others—Spirits of men, animals, and flowers on other planes—The strange frames of mind among certain people who pass over—Some cases observed

CONTENTS

PAGE

by Dr. Coulter—The ironworks, abode of those who stubbornly refuse to recognise their faults—Souls may remain ignorant for a time of their changed condition.

FOURTEENTH LETTER 209

The varieties of life in the universe—The planets as spirits can see them—The sun is not what you believe it to be—Life on Mars, Juno, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter—The earth as spirits know it to be—Some prophecies of Dr. Coulter's—Letter from a recent arrival.

FIFTEENTH LETTER 238

Lord Sandwich's letter on healing—The need for health, spiritual and physical—Man is living for a purpose, as are planets—A right understanding of faith-cures—The danger of unscientific practices—God is all-powerful, and will is a great force, but disease does exist—The three diseases into which all ailments on the Rhea plane are divided—The vital questions of prisoners and white slavery.

SIXTEENTH LETTER 267

Evolution, material and spiritual—The envelope race—Thinking powers among animals—Other forms of evolution—The story told by an aged stone—The development of spirit comes through effort and service—Cataclysms are a part of progress—This was realised by thousands who died together from a volcanic eruption—Soul evolution, or the continuity of lives, alone explains what is otherwise inexplicable.

SEVENTEENTH LETTER 282

The religious thoughts of the world—All early people worshipped God in Nature—The building-up of religion—How the eating of flesh passed from a rite to a greed—There are too many forms in the world's religious thought to-day—Understanding could be reached if it were desired—The religion of India—The burial of the dead, and why cremation is necessary—The religions of China, Japan, and Persia—Christ's message to the world—Reformers of the past and need for reform now—The Bible contains the truth if you would but see it.

EIGHTEENTH LETTER 302

The Bible's testimony as to the communion of spirits—Faith and prayer.

PART I

LETTERS

FIRST LETTER

Time, space, and spheres are thought—Ethereal houses—The language of the spirit—Mankind is ready for understanding—Nothing avails if gained at the expense of others—The Scriptures and continuity of lives—Elijah's re-birth as John the Baptist not considered a solitary instance of continuity—There is no danger for you if your house is cleanly lived in and if you seek communication with highly evolved spirits alone.

TIME and space are forms of thought; and thoughts, to express themselves, may become things. To grasp this, we must understand the laws that govern ether and its many inhabitants.

We of the spirit belong to ether, as do you of the earth; only we are of one substance, and you of another. You are represented in the flesh because thought has taken that form in your present expression; my thought has its expression in spirit or ethereal substance. You see yourselves; we see not only ourselves, but you too. Your ether is solid about you; and you, being part of the substance of that ether, are excluded from vision beyond. For vision, though within the reach of all, depends upon certain conditions, which are mental.

Our bodies are finer expressions of thought than yours, but can be reached by means of your earnest thought. Concentration is essential for the acquiring of knowledge; only men who have devoted the best years of their lives to some particular branch of study have succeeded; knowledge is gained slowly, and does not come to those who go wool-

gathering. The things you read must become digested; numerous books should be read on the subject you are trying to make your own, because you must get the colour of men's thoughts and see what conclusions they have reached before you can draw your own. You cannot succeed in any study or activity of life without the aid of brother-men. The earth and the heavens are united; but steps are necessary between them, some ascending, others descending. Jacob's Ladder was symbolical of the meeting of the spheres.

Time and space, as I have already said, are thought; so, spheres are thought, and your sphere depends upon your thought when you come to a conscious understanding of the individuality of spiritual life.

Sense-impressions are made: it is a detail whether you consider ether as a conception or as a perception; only consider it, and realise that both you and I are part of it. You represent one form of that etherised condition, and I another; but I have had your form, and you may have had mine. I might again enjoy the privilege of an etherised flesh-thought like yours, and you will enjoy an etherised spirit-thought like mine. We are all a part of the great drama of life, and each part has been or will be played by us. Wherefore the laws of life, rules that have been formed by various experiences, have to do with us all. Do not shut your doors to the fragments of truths you may see; recognise their value, become children at the seat of knowledge; "Seek, and ye shall find, and in abundance." Do not place people or things in grooves, or you will fall into one yourself, and be cut off from the sunlight of understanding.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

There is going to be a revolution in thought generally. You cannot dissociate thought from time and space; but what seems time to one man may seem space to another. The understanding of time, space, and ether, the fundamental principles of life, will cause many scientific changes to be made. You have yet to realise that evolution and revolution are the same; a man must have a revolution to appreciate evolution and the importance of life. Millions of lives, millions of mentalities, have been employed in unravelling the secrets of life. We all have a mission: you have your part of life to grasp, as the spider has his part to learn in the building of his web-house. We all build houses of many descriptions; from out the fibre of their brains men are making a variety of things, for everything is ordered mentally. There are some failures, but success is made up of failures. If you, in the very beginning, made a success, you would not understand the variety, the colour of life.

One man came to me not long since, and said: "I am beginning to know why I was so unhappy in my last earth-life. My mother, whose only claim to that divine name was in the mere lettering of it, sought to make me a fool—a man with thought narrowed to the principles which she lived. My earliest recollection of my father is following him from saloon to saloon to see that he did not drink. So my young life was spent in playing the spy upon my father, that honourable position having been given me by my mother. Drunkard that he was, my father had a heart; he would consider me in his stupor, and say: 'Child, go home. Your mother needn't think that you prevent my drinking.' I firmly believe that he would not have been

what he was, if he had been less hounded. In the daily quarrels that took place, my mother held me up as a pitiable example of youthful sacrifice, deprived of study and amusements while tramping the streets as spy. Such was my life. That father died; that mother was content, hanging on the crumbs of life, never realising what a world of love there was in a child if he had been given a chance of expression, or the joys she lost by neglecting him. Thus we both forfeited our chance for a friendship which might have lasted to all eternity; for love is as necessary as the ether you breathe, and those who shut themselves up in their selfishness are cut off from love, which is God expressed and Harmony demonstrated. But to return to the father on whom I was sent to spy. I now realise that only those who are ready to be helped can be helped. It is through mistakes that many find their way; and the policy followed by my mother and myself in regard to my father merely retarded his life and ours, for we were neither living nor thinking."

Regulate your lives, but do not try to regulate the lives of others except by the power of love, by the opportunities you can offer, and by the example of your own virtuous life. A woman of the street who sells her body for bread is not half so bad as the woman who gives her body in unholy love. Love—do not defile that word. Your bodies are your temples; help those who are in want by removing the necessity for sacrifice. It will not be a gift we confer, but a duty we fulfil, as we are all brothers and sisters. And it will be returned to you tenfold, as it will establish your relationship with God our Father, who loves all His children, who wants us all to be instruments of good. But

to be perfect in this respect, you must remember that nothing you have is yours, not even your bodies, as all belongs to the Father; and the soul, to be a perfect tenant in one of God's mansions, must be just and kind to its neighbors in other mansions. Help people to help themselves, and do not charge too high a toll for the passage of man's thought-expression over the physical highway of life. It is a dangerous tax; but then you do not know how to apply the right principle of taxation even to your material things of the earth. Taxes should be on land value only, in other words, rent paid for the use of land. Rivers, lakes, seas, and mountains should be free for the use of man. One of the greatest feelings of freedom comes when we are spirit in the ethereal expression, and we no longer meet with signs "Do not trespass."

We are free spirits, we can come and go at will: no one of us would ever burden himself with ownership. Being the children of one Father, all of His worlds are ours; we are not restricted to one country or people, yet one language suffices for us all, the language of thought which needs no interpreter. We talk quickly and intelligently, man to man and face to face; we could not deceive, nor do we wish to, and we should have no object in trying, for we are what we are and seem what we are. The beauty of life, in the fuller realisation of its many powers, dawns on us when we understand that time or space is not important, that we are part of one time and of one space, and that all time and all space are one; that our Father's world is all worlds, that those marvellous heavenly bodies which float through space are for us too, that we may pass upon them without fear of trespass, and get into touch with other atoms to learn all

that can be taught us by contact. But though it is through contact that we learn, we must not forget that all life is vibration. The vibration of man depends not only upon colour, but also upon number, since number is harmony demonstrated by work.

I firmly believe that when you have understanding, all things will be right, and that you can acquire understanding now. Unnecessary discord in life is what pauperises you and keeps you from the light, which cannot shine if you cover it over. Harmony, that is, co-operation and organization, is required so that each man may benefit by the time and the money devoted to work. It is mutual benefit, and not one man's loss to another, which means gain. And the hunger which causes physical deterioration for one brother is a loss to all. Now, brother, do not make thieves and murderers, and then imprison the first and hang the second. These common offences are the fault, not of individuals, but of society as you have organized it.

The thought is the real thing. Be honourable in all your dealings with yourself as with others. To commit murder is no worse than to plot a murder which you are prevented from executing; the man who breaks into the bank is no more a thief than the man who wishes to break in and cannot. Even to covet one man's property, so that another may benefit by it, is wrong.

And, suffering from the complex evils of monopolies by one man or one set of men, the remedies you suggest reside in the substitution of other monopolies by another man or another set of men. The true remedy lies as far as from the political form of Communism as it does from all forms of individualism. The anarchist who, obeying orders, cuts

down a man in position, does not change the law that put that man in, and has no guarantee that the successor appointed by the same law will be as good as the murdered man.

The failures of life are not those men unsuccessful in attaining high positions, but those who neglect the opportunities afforded to them for work and study. High positions are not necessary; greater advancements often come to the middle classes, as they are more frequently the workers. Work is held out to all, but all do not equally appreciate its privilege. The clashing and contending for supremacy, and your gain in money, will not avail you, but will, on the contrary, be held against you if you do not do your share in the work of the world. When you do harm to brother-man you do harm to God, and He is a jealous God, anxious for the happiness of all His children.

Firmly establish this fraternity, be in common with the desires of other men. Jesus the Brother, the Communist, stands before you to-day as when His Spirit was expressed in the flesh; and He has a conscious understanding of all things. His voice is still calling us all to our Father in holy love—us, like you, for there are no dead. If you search into your soul, you will find much work to do; the days are too short for the alert man and for the alert woman. O Eternity! what it is to know that life is continued—that we shall all meet and be known as we are! Bickering and quarrelling over paper houses and other foolish toys, your savings made at the cost of love and of life's earthly expression of happiness, your fighting and your struggling and your scheming, are equally useless. We who have lived, and who have seemingly died, tell you that your lives

of earth are being wasted in silly endeavours. The only things worth while are union and love.

Do away with creeds, dogmas, 'isms; do not try to get a corner on God or man. Let every man have a chance, and help him to have it. Though God is no respecter of persons, He requires that you, when He has given you power, should respect your brothers and treat them fairly; for must not this sentiment of equality exist, since the law that causes the birth of one man causes the birth of another.

When the panorama of life's deeds comes before you at physical death, you will not be happy at realising failures. Life is important, and your houses are your opportunities for expression; live well in them, live to die and die to live, and to have a broader appreciation of the fulness and beauty of God's glorious gift—life. Give us more life, and let us feel the joy of it; take from us the ashes and ruins of decay; let us build our houses upon the rock; seek a high mountain in your endeavours, and let each step lead us a little higher. It may cost us an effort, it may cost us suffering: but Job says, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth." Despise not chastening. As we read in the Proverbs: "Remove from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me." The wisdom of those words, spoken hundreds of years ago, came from men who still live and realise the meaning of life.

The millions of souls that have been born in the thousands of years have found many houses to live in: the house or body changes, but the spirit is the same. When Elijah said unto Elisha (2 Kings, ii. 9-15), "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I am taken from thee,"

Elisha answered, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Then Elijah said: "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." We are then told that Elijah saw not "him," but "it"—meaning the spirit; and having seen, Elisha proved that he had the power to do Elijah's work. Wherefore Elijah's "mantle" fell upon Elisha, who from that time had powers he never had before. The spirit of Elijah was demonstrated in the flesh several times, as we read in the New Testament. But Malachi prophesied it (Malachi, iii. 1): "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, saith the Lord." Chap. iv. 5, 6: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers."

Passages treating of John the Baptist have often been quoted, generally one by one, to prove re-incarnation; but by this method supposed contradictions have been found. If, on the contrary, we bring these references together, we see clearly that there is perfect accord among the four Evangelists, and evidence from different directions has been brought together by them all tending in one direction, establishing the principle not of re-incarnation but of continuity of lives.

St. Matthew devotes two important and explicit passages to the subject; in the first, it is the Christ Himself who makes the positive assertion that John the Baptist was Elias, and in the second it is the Apostles who agree in understanding that He alludes to John the Baptist.

Matt. xi. 12-15 (Jesus speaking): "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Matt. xvii. 10-13: "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

Mark's evidence is given in chapter ix. verses 11-13: "And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come? And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of Man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought. But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him."

As for St. Luke, he quotes no less an authority than the angel which appeared to Zacharias (Luke, i. 11-17): "And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall

rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

It is St. John who is sometimes quoted in contradiction. But read his words carefully, in the first chapter, verses 19-21: "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No."

What contradiction can be read there? St. John the Evangelist records the conversation faithfully, wherefore he attached importance to it and did not consider that vain words had been spoken; he expresses no opinion of his own, but quotes that of John the Baptist. Only one life can be lived at a time, and few spirits remember previous lives, or, while dwelling in one physical house, the other physical houses in which they have dwelt previously. Therefore John the Baptist may perfectly have been unaware, in his full consciousness, that he had been Elias. But in his subconsciousness he cannot have been unaware of it; for did he not proclaim himself as the Forerunner, and could he have ignored the prophecy by which the forerunner of Christ was to be Elias?

Lest it be claimed that this was a single exception, Elias living again as John, and that this should not be applied broadly, it is well to add yet another quotation. Naturally enough, the Evangelists, with only limited space at their disposal, could not multiply unnecessary instances of unimportant lives; yet they testify to the fact that the belief in the continuity of lives was general at that time, and applied to others than Elias, notably to Christ Himself Mark, vi. 14, 15: "And king Herod heard of him (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets." So men then believed that those who had been prophets could come again to earth in another form and give a message.

The messages of Elisha, who came in many bodies or physical houses, were always for the betterment of men. He foretold on earth the coming of Christ the Saviour; but he also heralded the coming of Christ into the world of spirits; and his messages tallied in very many respects.

Different lives are required to bring about development of the spirit, and these lives are not necessarily spent on one plane. We have all of us had various expressions of thought, and more await us. We spirits are not a fifth part of the individual we were in the earthly experiences. We have to our credit all that is worth while and real; those things that we did which were not help and harmony must be undone. While we are living one part of the life in our continuity, the memory of previous parts may be blotted out. In our subconscious brain, however, we have carefully

stored all valuable information gained in previous houses, and we do not need actual memory at all times.

Elisha had a very clear grasp on life, realising its inner significance; and he was well fitted to pave the way for the Master who, having the spirit of God the Father expressed in Him, was prepared to give us words of priceless value. Christ had gained information from the Father even before the worlds were formed; and while imparting it to us, He demonstrated throughout his whole life His love and human sympathy. The strength of His spirit was such that He was able to transfigure Himself before Peter, James, and John; His raiment then became luminous, showing the beauty and purity of His divine being. It was with this divine body, eclipsing the physical, that the Apostles saw Elias and Moses conversing. But His appearance after death was different. Even Mary Magdalene did not know Jesus when she saw Him at the tomb; Peter and other disciples had the same experience, not knowing Jesus until He spoke with them. After the lapse of so few days they would all certainly have recognised Him immediately, if His passing to the spiritual plane had not altered Him. His spirit was the same, but His house had changed.

Your so-called common-sense and matter-of-fact age upon earth leads most of you to overlook one of the greatest of Christ's works in dealing with unclean spirits and obsession, and training His disciples to deal with them. The lunatic whom Christ cured, rebuking the devil until it departed out of him, meant obsession. In almost every chapter of the four Gospels, and often several times in a chapter, this subject is mentioned. Particularly significant is the case of the unclean spirit which went out of

a man and coming back, found the house swept and garnished so that he could not get in. This showed that the man was leading a clean life. By right thinking and by taking care of your house, you can be protected against others who might wish to use it.

Your houses can be important only when you make them so. Instead of seeking to effect this, man creates conditions which result in extreme difficulties, in disquietude, in lack of understanding. All this could be done away with if you would realise the importance of spirit, and the blessedness of that love preached by Jesus, who asked Peter unto the third time whether he loved Him! You need love, you need faith, you need realisation of the inner self which will strengthen the outer: then only can you be happy and whole. We can all have that relationship of which Jesus spoke as ties far closer than those of blood.

As it is, we draw near you, and many of you are talking with us mentally and are receiving. But if you would build an oracle in your heart or brain where you could withdraw to pray, if you would express your earnest thoughts, we should be enabled to reach you readily and help you in your work. Thanks to that full communion with the spirit world, man upon earth would indeed feel that the divine chord of Harmony had been struck, that life is everlasting and that you are in the midst, that the semblance of man is but the shell for a kernel of great price.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

SECOND LETTER

The meaning of harmony and the necessity for it—All things tell their tale of struggle—Mankind is neither thorough nor practical—Why we of the spirit return to earth and wish to communicate with you—We can help and have helped in every branch of social activity—Souls evolve on the spiritual plane as on the physical—The brotherhood of spirit and of man—Each soul is a world and needs love.

ETERNAL Harmony is of God: it is a true understanding of love in the highest.

We do not always need happiness or plenty to have Harmony, as the Harmony taught by the Great Master, Christ, meant the uniting of physical with spiritual man. Even imperfections of character cannot prove lasting obstacles; for imperfections lessen as one gets in touch with one's true self, which cannot be out of Harmony.

Divide your body into three parts: feet and legs as base, the stomach and vital organs as trunk, the lungs, heart, and head as the divine. The head governs, with the help of the heart, for the whole of the body is dominated by the will. But to realise the beauty of your flesh-temple and make it serve you faithfully, you must understand the other parts as well as the ruling one. A deep appreciation of life, and a tender regard for all the grand and wonderful things that go to compose it, are needed before balance can be acquired and the brain can exercise fitly the task of decision which devolves upon it. But how will all this avail if your doors and windows are not held ever open, ready to give or to receive?

The fulness of life vibrates in every fibre of our being, and allows other living things to communicate with us. Not only animals, flowers, fruits, stones talk with us, but the very holes in the Ether do also. Every living thing has to tell similar tales of struggle. The struggle of man the flesh against man the spirit is emblematic of what goes on in all other forms throughout all the ages. Some might condemn this struggle, but I would not have it otherwise. To work, to earn step by step, is the desire of every real soul. You of the earth think that you grow weary in mind brain. We of the spirit inhale the flavours of fruits, nuts, and in body; you need food to refresh you—and yet the food you eat often retards your circulation and clogs your flowers. So we are always ready for the utmost effort. Your efforts are too often concerned with means for material life or preparations for what you call death. As a man gets old, he allows the thought to consume him gradually, instead of seeing the beauty of each age and living each day to the full.

You either devote yourselves to one thing until it becomes a hobby, or you fail to take serious hold at all. You are neither thorough nor practical, you get just enough learning to deceive yourselves and others. This sort of thing does you no good. You would do far better to become children of nature, to acquire the language of animals, of plants, of stones, which could all speak to you as they do to us: they could teach you true usefulness, they could help you to stand elsewhere than in your own light. Rhea, the planet you inhabit, is beautiful to a degree. You have there everything that is lovely, and all things reproducing and multiplying themselves all the while, as

their individual expression is intended to last for only a few short years. But those years are sufficient for you to grasp the meaning of life if you wish to.

You must begin by accepting the principle that the two seemingly most important events of your life, birth and death, are the same. Both alike are changes from one plane to another, and both signify opportunity. Our heavenly Father is kind in allowing us to begin over again many times, in the fulfilment of our continuity of lives. We are told that in our Father's house there are many mansions; we also are allowed many, so that if one is inadequately carpentered, or is wrongly inhabited, we may benefit by another. Our so-called fathers and mothers give us our physical bodies, but our soul has ever been of God and is one with God. Your physical body is only an expression; but you must make that expression comprehensive.

It is a singular fact that few people on earth really live; they seem asleep; the shadows about them are so dense that they can scarcely see, and are seen with difficulty. Yet the veil can be rent. There are no dead. The dead are with you, and you with them. Harmony between the worlds can be established only when fear of the so-called dead is demolished, and when the friends who succeed in returning to you cease to be regarded as different. They are the same beings as before, their love is the same, only their understanding has grown while yours has remained atrophied. If you were only ready, there are many who could come to you now, with their message of love, knowledge, Harmony.

Why make all this mystery of death, with drawn blinds,

with lowered screens, with tears and lamentations to repel and distress the spirits who would draw near you and who feel little change in themselves. The birth, over which you do not mourn, may be far more unfortunate, unless the spirit of the child is placed in good conditions for moral training. Where there is no light of understanding, there is death, and a wasted life is worse than death. Early idleness and lack of training lead many youths to crime who would have been glad of a chance for higher training, if they had only known. Your schools do not even teach life as you believe it to be and try to live it; your teachers do not seek Harmony with their pupils, but authority over them. Teach self-control to children, reveal to them the importance of mental man, represent the necessity for keeping the physical house clean because therein reposes the spirit, demonstrate the laws of nature, without a knowledge of which no mechanism can yield its utmost of effort and benefit—and you will have made a beginning of education.

Your human body is a machine which daily needs attention. The spiritual body needs very little attention, because it is in Harmony with all nature and draws force from all sources.

We of the spirit are not to be thanked for whatever we may do for you of the physical houses: by helping you we help ourselves; when we become your guides, your evolution is our evolution. Work is our real object, as it should be yours. Therefore those of us who have reached a sufficiently high stage to be able to help men with our experience and our opportunities for wide observation do not come back to state we are happy in the life beyond.

We come back to serve. Where service consists in proving the possible beauty of this life, and of yours too if you but knew how to understand, we may talk of that, of course; but there are countless other fields for our useful activities so far as you are concerned.

We can give you courage to fulfil duties already recognised by you, but not adequately accomplished; we can inspire you with the ideals of which you fall short. We do not scorn material means; we do not preach to men that financial disinterestedness of which they themselves brag most when they are keenest in profiting by their personal chances for gain. We know how much can be accomplished by money; but what we do preach is, that money, too often used for exploiting work and workers, can be used for the benefit of work and workers, and must be so used if those put in temporary possession of it would grow in spirit and remain worthy of their gifts and opportunities. There is not a branch of social activity upon earth in which we are not anxious to help and able to help, or in which our utility has not already been tested and applied by those prepared and willing to heed us.

You must not think that people who lived in physical houses thousands of years ago are standing still and useless; they are employing every means to go on with their work. They may do this either by being reborn in physical houses or by exercising their influence from their spiritual houses. Cæsar himself could not rest content with remaining throughout eternity the Cæsar who ruled Rome and her vassals. Men called Napoleon a success for having conquered nations; but spirits knew that he had failed in that he had not conquered Napoleon.

If we could but make you all look upon the truth of what I am telling you, so much real good would come of it. The understanding would create a greater love among you; would destroy personal, selfish love; would give the larger love. If you have children, they are a sacred obligation, they will marry and have children, and thus will it be from generation unto generation; yet still Ether will be their guide as yours, service their privilege, and love their opportunity.

You upon earth who already have understanding of life feel in your hearts the throbs of great sympathy for your fellow men. The Brotherhood of spirit exists actively, and in practical form, among us; we hold vast meetings, where all vital subjects of the world are discussed. We call ourselves Brothers of Light. But we cannot be in perfect Harmony while debarred from any one sphere. We want to enlarge our membership, we want it open to every thinking man and woman who is convinced of the importance of life.

Tell us mentally that you wish to join us; tell us your point of view upon matters of the earth or of eternity; tell us whatever you think is needed for reform near you—and we shall tell you what we think. God said that where two or three were gathered together in His name, He would grant their request. This is true also of God's spirits. But in order that you may benefit by this force, you must learn to be earnest: you must stop flitting from flower to flower, getting only a little honey here and there. You must work hard to earn your living in a new sense of duty to God. Thus you will be helping Him to rule His universe and pay the debt for what you are receiving. The only coin He can

accept from you is love and service. And, at the same time, you will free yourselves from the desire for anything you have not earned. Most of us get much more than we deserve, either by being connected with some one or else by the mercy of our Father, God. But stop measuring your wealth by earthly belongings, because they are unreal. See what you have in the attic of your brain, see if any pictures lie there, or only daubs and cobwebs.

There are many who are able and willing to do more than they do, but who do not know how to start. Begin in a small way, see if in your immediate neighbourhood any need help—and help them. They will lead you to others, as like attracts like. You will not need to seek far after the work which is awaiting you. I would tell you as a friend not to look for thanks; if you do it for thanks, you are not worthy, you are not advancing, you are not fulfilling your duty to brother-man in the general scheme of unity. Do it for the sake of work, of Harmony; do it because a brother or sister is poor, diseased, or outlawed. When you have helped these to rise, whether materially, bodily, or spiritually, they will hold out their hands to others in those positions which so recently were their own. Love is, after all, the elixir of life.

I have been a physician; I have dealt out death-pills and many sorts of human torture. But if I were again a doctor on earth I should accomplish much only with water, air, and love. It is strange how much love our brothers can stand; they are starved for it, and are greedy when they commence to get it; often they demand very heavy doses. But I have never known a case where an overdose was possible. Do not dilute it in too much water

or coat it with too much sugar, however; or give it one colour here and another elsewhere. Administer the real, old-fashioned stuff our mothers and fathers fed us on when we were boys and girls. It is good for all time. Forget you are growing old; do not count the days, and the hours will pass unperceived. Time is important only in the things that you do; you are all wasting a lot of it trying to regulate it, and it usually takes care of itself.

Many of you, in the thoughts you draw about you, become hardened with too much outer self, and shut out the divine light. This causes you to retrograde. When a plant is nipped by the frost or burned by the sun it wilts on the wayside. So with man, who is simply another kind of plant. He must draw about him the right conditions. An unfriendly feeling, an atmosphere of discontent in two or three people surrounding you, has influence in affecting you. Man is sympathetic in many ways and sensitive in every part of his being; even the hairs of his head respond to conditions, as do all other parts of his body.

Think of each human soul as a world; then think of the world, and realise that you are a grumbling, hard-hearted, unsympathetic lot. You are all taking everything and giving nothing in return. Where a person is born ahead of his time, you almost stifle the life out of him. Life, being vibration, means warmth, means a near relationship with all things, means that you and I are brothers though millions of miles and æons of time may have divided us. I may have lived in the East, and you in the North or West; but time and distance do not exist. You men have tried to corner time as you would corner grain, and seemingly you have succeeded, much to your own sorrow. But

you make such slight mistakes as to talk of twelve months, whereas there are really thirteen, and to make up for the odd one you have had to divide time with the help of a leap-year. So you fix your own time and set your own clocks—and often stop them just when the machinery gets into working order.

No one is really bad, but many are ignorant and are condemned by men as being bad. All who dwell in the dark rather than enjoy the light are ignorant, hence exposed to misinterpretation of life's laws; and though they may not be ranked in the earthly band of criminals, they risk committing injustices which will weigh heavily against them before eternity. This would be obviated if they would but consent to come into Harmony with us, and learn the truths of eternity as we are enabled to teach them.

Unfortunately, much erroneous talking by spirits not highly evolved, and not qualified to express opinions about matters they have had neither the length of life nor the opportunity to fathom, have served to confirm superstitions among the ignorant. Pain is an awful reality in the flesh, and exists even in the spirit, though not as in the flesh. We have worrying souls who are always predicting dread calamities for their friends. They are a burden to themselves and to others. One often finds this in the case of mothers and those whose protecting care has long been exercised in the flesh. Those feelings only wear away as the will of the spirit progresses beyond the power of discord; its consciousness needs the intelligence born of trust and hope to protect the individual from harm. In our higher world, the consciousness of affection is intensified, and the power of happiness greatly developed.

My remark about spirits not qualified to express their opinions may have caused some surprise. You must not believe that we are idle here, in the mental sense any more than in other senses. We recognise deeply the necessity not only for work, but for learning, in all stages of our evolution. We have schools of all grades where the simple rules of life are taught, with studies carried on by object-lessons as the pupils advance. Children aged anywhere from eight to eighty years or more, as you would reckon time, follow masters well informed on the subjects under discussion, and by their close attention give proof of their interest. Souls on which affliction has weighed too heavily find hospitals where, while being cared for, they can learn the new laws of life—first, and most important, that of Harmony. In other classes, the earthly and spiritual sciences are taught, and the order of life is explained. The meaning of the continuity of lives is made clear, and the necessity for many lives.

Some here, as when they were upon earth, at first dislike the idea; they do not accept the belief that they and their friends must have other houses. If you would stop to think, you would realise the significance of these three lives in one: spirit before birth—life in the body—and death as the door opened to spirit for another life in another world. These are but three expressions of one life, and without them life itself would appear so inadequate as to be scarcely worth serious discussion. Some souls now dwelling in physical houses used to inhabit one of the other planets, or even inhabited the same world before; others have never before had physical expression. There are, indeed, spirits here who have never

dwelt in a physical house; they look much as we do, perfect in form, and are very human in their desires.

Spirits must know their own key and the sound-board of their being before they have the power of helping. All who pass into the spirit life do not have sight, as sight is a gift. Prophets are gifted, as are musicians and other artists; it is one of the greatest of gifts, as it conveys clear understanding of nature and its laws.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

THIRD LETTER

Man in the flesh is already benefiting by the influence of man in the spirit—Your chief obstacle is scepticism, and your worst error is to seek us for idle or silly purposes—Your own soul is an instructor for you—We stand consciously in the temple of the living God—The care you should take of your physical houses—After so-called death you are your own judge—Indulgence in grief for the death of others retards their growth—How you can distinguish good spirits from evil, and how you can prepare yourselves for helpful communication with us.

MILLIONS of people are beginning to perceive manifestations in which the overwhelming majority among them are still unwilling to believe. Whether he knows it or not, whether he acknowledges it or not, man in the flesh is already benefiting by the influence of man in the spirit. The field of operations matters little; what is of vital value is the work accomplished, and the rewards are proportionate to the service rendered.

Many have an inadequate conception of the nearness of the physical and the spiritual man to one another. We on this side can hear your voices, can read your thoughts, and can often distinguish the colour of your ideas. Language is needed on the physical plane, but to us is superfluous: what you call impressions are to us clear intelligence. The soul is thought, and the cultivation of thought means the better understanding of impressions. To get the spark from steel, you must hammer hard; to gain knowledge, you must dig deep into the stores of human minds or into the bosom of mother earth, or must soar high into the upper regions

of your atmosphere. Yet truth surrounds you on all sides, ready to be revealed whenever your minds are unlocked to it and your eyes unveiled.

Man's deliberate reluctance has alone shut him off from penetration into spiritual laws. The ordinary man is often far nearer to a real grip of God's love and a real knowledge of His law than the man of so-called culture. Education can only begin when you realise what a mere atom you are in the universe, and that strength can come to you through Harmony only after you have willingly opened the doors of your nature.

To reach the fount of truth, you must first get into touch with your real self and with the real selves of your friends. We earnestly wish for communication with you. Having lived the life you are now living, we can at least assure you that we still are, as you will be; and so the great meaning of life will dawn upon you. But you must take the first step of casting aside your scepticism about ethereal life. Make a fair use of those reasoning powers whose development has been a source of such pride to you in recent generations. That poor carcass in which your spirit is enclosed, and against the limitations of which so many of you affect to rail, is not your worst obstacle and is not the chief culprit. It is one of the manias inspired by your vanity, to be always making excuses and seeking subterfuges.

When you seek us, it is to make us rap furniture, or satisfy your idle curiosity by answering silly questions about material concerns of no more real importance to you than to us, or else to ask that we touch you in order to convince you that we are indeed there. A spirit which has

done its duty upon earth, which is pursuing its evolution, which is, in a word, able and ready to help you, cares nothing for clownish tricks or for telling you where you lost your pocket-book; and as for touch, we cannot have the same firmness of grasp as we had in the flesh. You are as unreasonable to demand all this as we should be to comply. You may say that one proof would convince you. I would then reply that whoso doubts once will doubt again, so long as he expects proofs to come from without. Faith comes from within.

When you will to feel our presence, when you will to hear our message, speak to us. As with the power of prayer, you need neither secrecy nor darkness, but only earnest desire, sincere concentration, and untiring efforts. As surely as you listen, we shall answer. It may take weeks, or months, or years, but if your thought holds firmly we shall be near with our help even before we have succeeded in piercing the veil of your conscious senses. We have long been making these efforts, while you have left us unaided; and where we have succeeded, you treat us in ungentle fashion. "Who are you? What do you want? Where is proof of your identity?" you say to us.

Once you have prepared your spirit for us, you will know we come to help; you will not see, but feel and read us as we are; you will understand that we are not dead but continuing our lives, that we are almost unchanged, save that we have grown, that we are not only living and loving, but are witnessing new scenes in the universe, as you do upon earth. We are as wonderful in our spiritual body as you are in your physical body; we make great discoveries, we explore new regions as you are happy to do

on your smaller scale; we have conscious knowledge that you are as much spirit to-day as we are; that if you are mortal now, death will only change the shell which conceals your spirit. Real life is not yours to lay aside, you cannot discontinue it, and if you live properly you will find ever-new opportunity for growth at every stage.

I have played many parts, so have you; as the life in man is everlasting, he can have infinite variety of expressions. The radiancy of life comes only when man has realised the great Fatherhood, and the brotherhood of man. It is service which brings this illumination. And then you will cast off the crust formed by unreasoned doubts and superstitious fears. Fears! Why, you have nothing to fear! You will die; you were born to die; and by death, provided you have lived, you will enjoy life consciously on the same plane with God.

Your own soul is an instructor for you. Get into communion with it, see its light, and respond, and then you may share its light with others. Then also you will cease to scorn your present plane. There is nothing wrong with your plane, but only with you. We may rightly talk of the spiritual beauty of the evolved soul; but what mechanism of nature could be more wonderful than the physical body of man! There is enough power in the brain of one man to make a nation, as was demonstrated by the sons of Jacob. The thoughts in the brains of many men suffice to evolve or devolve worlds.

All the peoples come to spirit; they are like one another, and yet different according to the environments in which they have lived. A red rose remains a red rose until the processes of nature change its colour and purpose. The

same is true of the perfume of souls; each has its own atmosphere. An Englishman is still an Englishman, but not to the same degree as when in England. Eastern people are still Eastern, though they change the colour of their ideas. Christ, the great Master, was born on the line dividing East from West, and so belonged to neither, but to the world.

We have something of that quality, here, and it is because we belong to no special physical country that we can come to you anywhere. But many of you are mistaken in the idea that we are anywhere by the mere fact of wishing it, or that we can be in several places at once. We can communicate with any place by means of thought, but to get there we must travel as you must on earth, though not in the same manner. Distances are not great for us; we rise above any atmosphere in which we find ourselves, and since our spiritual bodies offer no resistance to Ether, we proceed swiftly to our destination. Whatever the number of thousands of miles, we feel no fatigue. Even our spiritual bodies might be tired if we thought them so; you of the flesh are mental masters of your bodies, but you do not get the maximum of service out of them, as you go into action thinking of the possible fatigue which awaits you. I know this to be true, because I have been as you are to-day. It is true of all life that much of the harm that comes to you is due to the mind.

Science is forging ahead, thank God. When enough people dare to claim that they have soul-understanding, and that we come not with idle words but with truth to reveal, and with the warning not to waste God-given opportunities, then you will know that you are all part of

Harmony, and that life itself is yours. You cannot do without us, any more than you can do without each other. And the artistic workers who have influenced their generations in music, painting, literature, were no more real and no more useful than we.

I once overheard a man say to a woman who had found help and comfort by communicating with a friend on this side: "Be careful, don't go too far. It may be dangerous." I felt like saying: "That fear is the thing which has made much of the communication between worlds dangerous."

Your own home is the proper place for you to seek communication with those who love you and who want to tell you of what they have found. And so you would not have to seek channels through which messages are sometimes tampered with. Where outside channels are depended upon, a true message may be given from this side, but may not get interpreted correctly. Therefore never take any advice which does not appeal to your judgment. People who have passed beyond your plane are not always able to give advice on your problems. Just as you do not go to your grocer's to buy a silk dress, do not apply to a spirit for information on a subject he may know nothing about. Remember that in talking with spirits you are talking with men and women, and their knowledge is in accordance with what they have learned. People do not become thinkers or poets or musicians spontaneously upon arriving here; they have only what they have earned. Hard study and genuine merit are the things which stand us in good stead, as with you on earth.

It is pathetic to see people come over here from all parts and all worlds, who know nothing, and have nothing

to their credit. They must be taken in hand at once and taught to use their faculties, to heed their share of God's glorious message, and convey it to others in their turn.

All must be taught the sciences, and also music, which unfolds the God-man through a realisation of Harmony. The tree of life must be known, too. For all this we question and receive answers in our thought-language. We can thus converse not only with the spirit of man but with other spirits, for all living things have intelligence according to their degree of comprehension.

Worldly possessions are set aside as toys which have served their purpose by amusing. It is known that the natural outcome of any form of matter is only to take on another form. The essential and permanent possessions of man are character, education, and the affections. These are carried on from sphere to sphere, and increase according to the endeavour.

The ethereal body is perfect in form; all disabilities leave you. Poverty of body and of brain is the result of matter, and here you stand forth cleansed. And, looking back then, you too will be able to help others, as we can help you, by presenting two pictures instead of one. You can learn much by reading a book on China, for instance, but you know the country better when you have been there yourself. So you can learn by reading books which unfold the problems of life, and can thus tear away many scales from before your sight; but you will learn more by looking into the temple of the Living God, where we now consciously stand. Until that day comes, however, you would be wrong, and would retard your progress, by

refusing to hear what is said by those who have seen more planes than one, and who retain their knowledge.

As a drop from the mighty ocean is as big as the ocean in the quality of power, so the seed of an apple is as big as the tree, and only outer development is needed for it to put forth branches and leaves and blossoms, or work, truths, and colours.

Whatever work you do is, or might be, like unto that seed. But many of you prefer foolish twaddle to real work, and so debar yourselves from the sunlight of perfect day and understanding. Progress needs every one of you in the ranks of serious toilers.

The early races of man did not possess what you call culture; they were not moved by what you call social laws; but they had no prisons or houses of prostitution, and insanity was unknown among them. They were children instead of being worldly-wise like you; but the complex crimes of your day did not exist. You, too, will have to become children again, and do away with your self-importance.

You must assist your spirit by confidence; you must be sure of success; for you are aware that one of the surest means to success is by feeling in advance that it is yours. But do not let arrogant conceit prompt you to attempt things of which you are wholly ignorant. To practise law you must study law. To relieve pain you must know medicine and anatomy, or have the divine gift of healing. But, having knowledge or power, and exercising it, you must be practical, and avoid self-condemnation as you would avoid the condemnation of others.

You are all inclined to see the supposed sinners of the

world; so look for the angels and workers. The thieves, the drunkards, the harlots, are your brothers and sisters. If you turn from them because they are weak, you only show that you yourself are weak in another respect, and are, perhaps, less estimable than they who may have sounder excuse than you for human frailties. Your own road needs too much clearing for you to attempt clearing the road of others; what they ask of you is friendly attention, not critical interference. By daring to criticise you do more harm in your world than by anything else. You are all more or less cowardly, and your criticism frightens many away from making the effort which would retrieve their fault. The little unkind word, often spoken in jest, is what turns the steps of many men and women in the wrong direction.

But if you owe love to your brother and sister, you owe healing, too, and very particular care to the insane. Insanity most often comes from misuse of the physical faculties, the sins of the fathers are indeed visited upon the children, and there you are all sinners to a greater or less degree.

What right have you to do harm to the temples of others, when all are made in the image of God? Temples are for worship, not for riotous living. Do not break the panes of glass, do not quench the fires of inspiration, do not repress the ambition of future men by giving them poor tabernacles to work in.

Nothing that is not right can stand. Nature in her working does not admit that mistakes should endure for ever. If part of your body becomes torpid, other parts are soon afflicted, and, if not remedied, become useless as

time rushes on, until the whole physical body is useless, and must be laid aside. But unless you have worked conscientiously, your etheric body may not be ready to receive you.

Your physical house is only lent to you, after having been built for you by the great Master Architect. Guides are taking care of you; but after all your life is yours, you are alone responsible for damage done to your house, whether physical or spiritual. And unless you care for it, disease will take hold upon it to cause you untold pain and distress. The form covering the soul is always beautiful and wonderfully made. Remember that God and man are one, and he who justly honours man to his betterment honours God.

Our spiritual bodies are ever young, as the spirit is part of God; we can no more grow old than Ether can grow old. But your physical bodies would respond better to the voices of youth if you took better care of them. Clean water is good for you; it keeps the thousands of little doors open and promotes circulation. Fresh air and proper nourishment are other essentials. There is evidence that some thousands of years ago man lived upon earth to a great age, several centuries, not looking older than what you would call an old man of eighty to-day. If they lived longer in the flesh, it was because of their uncooked foods, their simple pursuits, their outdoor existence, their freedom from formalities, their deep understanding.

Do not conclude from these remarks that long life upon earth is necessary for your development spiritually. One man may accomplish more in ten years than another in eighty. What counts is the thing accomplished, and not

the duration of the lien. The point I am trying to prove is, that you must neither despise nor neglect the flesh which gives you expression; for not only your own faculties depend upon it, but the faculties of others whom you create, and whom it is your duty to create, depend upon it also in a way.

The average man gives too little thought to the problem of life, being as it were tied to the details of life. The question of life, which is neither more nor less than an essential part of the complete understanding, is thrust aside by you, while your mind is confused by small and insignificant things. Each man being a temple in himself, no element is unimportant, just as no element can be independent of the others. Only when peace reigns within you can happiness come from without.

The temple of your body is a reunion of many different members whose complete life can alone make you a complete whole, and help you towards complete understanding of spirit and matter alike. You must exercise your mind to make it yield the maximum of which it is capable; but so long as you live in your flesh-house, you must exercise the body also, that its parts may be sound, and its circulation perfect, or the action of your brain will be retarded.

Walking and deep breathing are what help you most. Friction is required before the flame can spring up, and contact is required before the faculties can act. Nothing comes from idleness. Flowers need rain and sunshine, but they must push their way up from mother earth before they can reach either. Positive and negative forces surround us, but we must be in a position to profit by them.

When able to act together, the positive and the negative may be likened to the male and the female; in the egg, for instance, the white represents the feminine, and the yolk the masculine; but the shell must be broken through, however hard it may be, before the creation within can rise to utility. So we all have to break through the shell of some surface.

Many are so closed in by their shells that they are helpless; but they themselves are chiefly to blame, for help is ever ready either from men or from us, if they will only allow us to come to their assistance. Many evils can be laid at the door of "luck," but most of these have their roots in lack of all reverence for either God or man. If out of the many called only few are chosen, it is because only few choose to respond.

Some of you inhabiting the planet Rhea are so blind, so deaf, so vain, so shallow, that you speak of life as if it existed on your sphere alone. You do not conceive the meaning of life, any more than you conceive the Fourth Dimension. But you are nearing this latter understanding, and when you hold it you will begin to see beyond.

In your physical houses you are dependent upon air, water, sun, as you are upon earth, rock, and sands, and upon everything whether called living or called dead. You may say you could live without flowers, but life without flowers would lack beauty; and a life without beauty is incomplete—hence, not life at all.

Your family sense does much to help in blinding you; you owe attention and love not only to your so-called family but to all your brethren. In your supposed families,

not one in a thousand of you has ever met another before. Birth is, like death, a circumstance. You come because there is a place for you, and you see an opportunity when man and woman come together to produce offspring. The child you may thus in turn produce is not yours: he is your Father's, as you are: he is your younger brother, or perhaps your elder; he may have had experiences on many planes of life. There may be an outside resemblance to you, since the same kind of timber has been used to build his house as yours; he may look like you, and may even inherit physically from you some strange characteristic of body; he may likewise be weakened by tendencies towards your diseases while not inheriting the diseases themselves. Diseases are dependent upon your flesh-soil and the fuel you use; therein enters your responsibility, not only towards yourself, but towards others. If you have neglected to reproduce life, you have failed in a great share of your earthly duty.

You ought not to need us to tell you this. The voice of Nature in your own hearts tells you so when you would listen; but you let passion and worldly wisdom sweep you aside from truth and from life. And if you do fear to hear us now, it is not only because of your superstitious dread of those whom you would treat as the dead, whereas you yourselves are the dead, because you only partially live. What you dread and avoid even more is the truth which risks disturbing your narrow, selfish, opportunist rut of life as you have chosen to trace it in your blindness and arrogance.

We do not wish to do your work for you; if the honour of opportunity for work has been put before you, it is not

for us to deprive you of it. There are lessons which can be learned by experience alone. You must be burned before you can appreciate the strength of flame; you must be nearly drowned before you realise the mighty rush of waters; so you must be born into the flesh, and then must sicken, suffer, and die in the flesh, before the meaning of life dawns upon you. But the dissolution between the physical and the super-physical man is a beautiful experience. One has a panorama unfolded of all one's life, and a retrospect showing where one's evolution stands. It is your judgment-day—not a general judgment causing all to rise from their graves, but an individual inspection. It is pleasant or unpleasant according to one's actions; and at all events one knows one's exact condition without needing the interference of another party. It is on earth that the other party can help—when he is heeded. You are not frank among yourselves; you are too sensitive in avoiding criticism of your faults. Few of you are perfect; but remember that if you had been perfect you would not have been sent to the school of the world. Get to be free from yourselves; turn away from idol-worship, whether of yourselves or of your friends. Do not allow priests or laymen to blind your vision; love, but love sanely, in a way that means help for the brother or sister, and for yourself too.

If a loss in human life affects you, turn to your God and ask the spirit of the loved one to give you strength. The so-called dead live; your grief only retards their growth, and their time, like yours, is important. Sadness brings but pain and waste of opportunity. Your groans for the departed can do no good; they neither bring you

understanding of life, nor bring back your dear one to his flesh-house. He has an ethereal body instead, in which he can communicate with you if you will but call to him in your own spirit and tell him that you are pleased with all the laws of God; that although you remain on the plane he has left, your love for him and interest in him are unaltered. The communion between you need not be interrupted because one of you retains the physical language; the musical language of the spheres is yours as well as his if you will but learn it, and is swifter, simpler, more complete than any known to you now.

Do not regard heaven as a place: it is a condition. Do not think of your spirit friends as far away; we are in no distant country: the electric currents which vibrate through all Ether can connect us whenever you wish to tear away the veil. Why be afraid of us? We can do you no harm, and would not want to if we could, because we stand absolutely responsible for everything we do. We, like you, must pay the price if, in sewing our garment, we put in a wrong seam; we must surely unrip and sew afresh. The language of thought does away with distance. You know that by reading the books of your world you can be in Egypt, Greece, Italy, America, England, wherever you please; by delving into history you can live in past ages by the power of thought. By the same power you can be with us now; and as you can choose your books among men, so you can choose your company among us who are spirits.

Tables may move, and they have moved for centuries, propelled by spirit-power; and other manifestations of various orders have taken place. Where they have brought

no message of help, they should be mistrusted, yet they are never to be scorned. All this shows an effort on the part of some unseen but real presence to demonstrate itself. Throughout the centuries man has been searching to ascertain if there is life after death. I acknowledge that there has not, so far, been much tangible proof; yet any proof is of importance. You can obtain the greatest, clearest proof, not by resorting to physical means for those who no longer have physical expression, but by offering a slight aid to spiritual means. Fruits and flowers are the things which help us, through their colour and perfume, which are part of God's spirit. Sit down near those fruits and flowers, put yourself in a receptive mood, remember that you are spirit also, and call upon us to come, as you would invite friends of your own plane. Each of you who has attained any degree of development has his own flower, which belongs to him because of service. You also have your number, according to your degree of advancement; your jewel, if you have earned one; your tree, and your fruit. If you learn your attributes, the communication will be made easier.

There is no need to search for truth as Nicodemus did, in the night. Truth has no fear of the sunshine.

Many people in the world will tell you it is wrong to do what all other men do not do; or they will tell you that only evil spirits would answer your call. Why, pray? Unless you yourself give more power to the evil than to the good, the evil could not be attracted to you. There is no conceivable reason why the bad should be specially privileged, and why the man who has outwardly died, leaving behind a wife and children he loved, should be

debarred. He obeyed a law of nature in dying—he probably did not ask to die; perhaps he had not asked to be born. But he was born, and conditions made life dear to him, and he is under no obligation to be silent after stepping beyond the grave. Men are not put on earth with the privilege of loving, merely to have all ties swept away as by a breath. No; a thousand times no. We all want to speak to declare our life.

Some men will object. "What do you have to say when you do come back?" they ask.

What would you expect us to say? What could be more useful than to bring you the assurance that our life is continued as yours will be, and that we can still help you and you can help us? We are not perfect here; our world, like yours, is peopled with many grades of souls. We, like you, are working towards the perfection which can only be gained through service. Work is the means—I was going to say hard work, but instead I say beautiful work—that will advance the great movements to which God Himself can only attain with the help of His children, who are part of Him.

But what you should shun in spirit-communications is the allowing of false prophets to tell you of the minor things of life. Attend to the real, and let the small attend to itself. Do not follow a man whose only thought is to tell you where to buy or sell property, and whom you should marry. Use your own judgment, if you have any, and try to acquire judgment if you have none. Live your private life according as you are qualified to live it. Talk only with disembodied men who will raise your moral standards, and who will increase your spiritual grasp upon God's laws,

who will command you to do your work and will not fear to tell you that you are a liar if you are one. Your life will only be the harder if you dare not face the truth.

All we ask is a fair trial—and what we promise is, that when this new communication is fully established, such trials as your wars will come to an end. Think, that the child will then be able to say from beyond the grave: "It is all right, mother: I am here, near you." The wife, or husband, or friend will say: "Patience—all is well with me, and our separation is but for a short while." The great warrior will tell you that, having come face to face with his victims or his victors, he knows that he failed to clear a way, since he merely removed obstacles which were immediately replaced by others. All alike who have paid the price of physical folly can prompt you to avoid like blunders, to forge steadily ahead. Then, too, we shall be avoided the spectacle which I witnessed a few of your earthly months ago, after a terrible accident which sent into our world many spirits totally unprepared to share our life—men and women who had lived with no other thought than three meals a day and a bed.

I once met a man just come to this side who had been a good man, in a sense: he had never stolen, had been drunk not more than two or three times, had had many friends, but felt so self-sufficient that he had never bothered himself about a future state, and trusted to "luck," to quote his own word. Well, he crossed over without any of the glorious feeling of life realised. As he wandered about, several people asked him what they could do for him; but he treated his new life as lightly as the old, saying, "This is nothing; I could almost fancy myself back on earth."

I remarked to him, "Yes, because your unbelief has clouded over your real self. It is better to make no claim than to make a false claim. You have seen and recognised several people whom you know, and your condition must be like theirs, or you could not be here. But you must learn to breathe into your soul the real life."

I did not see him for some time. When we met again, I hardly knew him for the same man: the other man had been living death; this one came fired with love, with hope, his heart was filled with the sense of beautiful nature, his brain was opened to wonder and admiration. His spirit-house had become a shrine.

If any one spirit comes to you giving advice contrary to your better judgment, do not listen any more than you would to an inadequate opinion in your world. Do not be blindly incredulous, but do not reach to the other extreme and be gullible. Evil spirits are not hovering about in such numbers as many seem to think; they have their own affairs to attend to, and no one can harm you if you trust in God and ask in His name. I am sorry to say that some people on earth make use of the name of some highly evolved spirit who may be millions of miles away. That spirit is then no more responsible for what is said than you are; and misrepresenting the thought of a spirit is as great a sin as misrepresenting the thought of a man. Your test can be the elevating or trivial character of the thought communicated.

We wish to help and can help only on spiritual lines; we take interest only in such material details as concern the advancement or retard of your soul. We do make keen observations of your daily life, and we talk with the direc-

tors to obtain such details as we may need. All must be clear to us before we can be truly helpful.

You are on the very threshold of the great power of understanding. Wherefore I beg of you, in the name of my co-workers in the spirit, to bar your senses against a fear which no longer is worthy of your times; to banish doubts whose sole force is to retard you; to have faith, and help us in opening our hearts to the fulness of life, and its truths.

PART II

SOME MESSAGES OF OTHER SPIRITS TO DR. COULTER

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

FOURTH LETTER

Death is but a convulsion of nature—As we enter the physical world unclothed, so we enter the spiritual—An understanding of Harmony banishes all idea of grief—The new life is so natural that many refuse to believe they are dead—Dr. Coulter tells of his last life on earth, and explains his present mission.

WHEN you look upon the tombs of great men you must realise that only the clothes are there, and that the marks of respect which you may give are owing to the love you have for them or their works, and not because you think to find there those who have gone before. Wherefore the city of the dead should never fill you with sadness, as there are no dead.

The deaths which come into your life may be compared with the earthquakes and volcanoes which come to disturb the face of the earth.

To begin with, these natural convulsions do much harm, or, I should say, cause much confusion, as steam or fusion in the under-world breaks through the crust. But three or four decades later the soil is rich and fertile once more, vegetation springs up with all the more ease and beauty because of the fire and water which once ravaged the region.

Death is so natural that most people do not realise they are making the change. The spirit body merely disengages itself from the physical. During the first few days the physical body has a singular claim upon us.

Most of us attend our own funeral, and observe with interest all that happens. We may continue to go back towards the body again and again, and many will not forsake its presence until definitely forced to do so.

Just as we enter the physical world unclothed, so we enter the spiritual world naked. But we are not ashamed. As for me, I enjoyed the freedom from restraint. It was pleasant no longer to be encased in clothes. Later, when I desired to do so, I put on the loose, flowing garments which I have since worn. When we dress, it is according to our degree of development, the degree being marked in the colour and the sheen of the garments.

Usually we are met by our spirit-mother, or our guide, or some close friend. Sometimes we experience grief just at first, because we see our beloved ones on earth uncertain as to our new home; then a great loneliness strikes terror into the soul. But this does not last long. As soon as God's presence is made manifest, all sense of anxiety departs, never to return. Little by little, friends surround us; we meet the poets and the sages of the past; we understand the language of birds, of trees, of flowers; and so we are led to know the spirit of all things, which, with the aid of sympathy, means Harmony.

The ethereal body is subject to desires, emotions, impressions, not quite like the physical body, yet resembling them sufficiently to cause the belief, occasionally, that the real has been an illusion. Some people have lived in spirit for twenty years, declaring that they are not dead; the panorama of scenes which came to them at death seemed only a dream. Such people are not found in great abundance; most know and thank God, and con-

gratulate themselves and each other that the change has been made.

A few years ago I met a man who was clothed in an ordinary suit, with a collar and cuffs, and all the paraphernalia that go to make up a man's outfit on earth. He talked to me of what was happening in Spain, criticised what this person and that was on the point of doing, and said he intended to go there himself to see what he could do to improve matters.

I said, "You can't interfere in things of that kind, and if you try they won't listen. They consider you dead."

He exclaimed, "Get out, you fool! Who's dead? I did have a slight cold, but I have recovered from it. I never felt better in my life!"

Another case was a woman who had died of cancer, and could not realise that there had been a change.

This may seem very strange, unless one understands that the real difference is marked, not in the outer condition, but in the development of the spirit.

Needless to say, this man's clothes, and this woman's cancer, seemed to exist only because of the concentration of their thoughts upon a memory of those objects.

In our world, no garment can come to you that you have not earned, and you may take many lives to earn it.

After that brief period of a few days I have mentioned, during which we are attracted towards our earth body, we become utterly indifferent to it. Be it buried as it is in the West, or given to vultures as is often done in the East, burned ashore, or cast into the sea, we care not at all. Spirits earth-bound for reasons which I shall discuss later may have some feeling. As for the rest of us, when we

go towards the earth it is because of the work that awaits us there, and not because matter is of any concern to us.

When I return here in spirit from some mission which has called me towards the earth-field, and I remember the scenes of unnecessary evil which I have witnessed, I feel that such things are now powerless to harm me; yet I feel, also, that they touch me deeply, because of my great love for those dear, struggling souls. But the very fact that they do struggle is an inspiration to me, as it should be to them, and blots all possibility of sadness from my spirit.

I know by bitter experience the frailty of the flesh, and the difficulty of struggle. And having been perfectly frank in dealing with the faults I detect among you, I am going to be equally frank in telling you something of my own life. Perhaps you would say "lives"; put it so, if that would help you to understand. My meaning is, that life being the principle of continuity, various so-called lives are only various expressions of a life, as the ordinary life of man is a *week* lived on the earth plane.

My last three experiences in houses of flesh will suffice to tell you my story. The others had served to prepare me for a message; you shall hear what I did with my opportunity.

I was ready for a great and useful work when I was born in the flesh a good many generations ago. The country I had chosen was Italy, and the family one of importance. I grew up to prominence and great power. The ecclesiastical vocation had been selected for me; I had no religious sentiments, but tried genuinely to develop them. Much was expected of me by those who sur-

rounded me; but they were hypocrites; and gradually I came to scorn men as well as organized religion, and so I came to abuse my power for selfish purposes. I think I can say that I was not a hypocrite; I pretended to nothing I did not feel; not service through faith, but service through influence for worldly advancement was what man demanded of me. I had a thorough knowledge of human nature, and managed those about me with a certain conscientiousness even if I did lack all religious sense. When my time for passing out came, I reproached myself with no great sin, and I felt towards life more disgust than revolt.

Then, coming to this side, I recognised that I had left my work unfinished; that I had had opportunity and had neglected it; that I had seen truly the frailties of religion as then organized, but had been to blame for not attempting some reform in the world's thought. I therefore willingly came back upon earth, expressly to be a reformer.

I chose to return to France, at a time when that country seemed ready for any mighty movement to sweep it. Had I been less zealous to atone for my fault by accomplishing work, perhaps I would have chosen my time or my field more wisely. The period was, in fact, one when men and women were not morally or intellectually true to themselves. As a child, I gave proof of a great thirst for learning. My father was opposed to this, and did what he could to obstruct me. I grew up to feel that almost no link attached me to him. For a time, as a young man, I was frivolous, but this did not last long. Then I was inspired by the desire to be a reformer. I had, of course, forgotten the details of my life immediately pre-

ceding; but the subconscious memory was there, prompting me to antagonism for religion as still organized, as well as to the yearning for positive work to set right all that I had judged wrong. But the learning which I had acquired, despite my father's efforts, added to what I had already stored up in the way of knowledge—and which, while not retained in all its fulness, gave fruit by preparing me for quick assimilation and development—proved my undoing. My wit was brilliant in an age when brilliancy was more highly prized than profundity. People did not want me to reform them, they wanted me to make them laugh—at the expense of others when I would, even at their own when I dared. I could be sarcastic, audacious, incisive, whatever the company in which I found myself. And, believing that I would encounter opportunity by frequenting rulers and thinkers, I wasted my intellectual substance on amusing and destroying; while my real message went begging, and, because it too long lacked expression, was presently lost sight of by my very self. So I did more harm than good, having attacked and torn down often to good purpose, but leaving in my tracks only piles of shattered stones and altars.

Again I died in the flesh, and again I looked back. This recent life had not been an absolute failure, since I had at least been honest throughout. I was, therefore, not compelled to come back upon earth. But I elected to do so. I wanted to retrieve those opportunities which I had stupidly lost in two successive lives. Furthermore, the earth seemed a sort of home to me; I felt that I belonged there until I had uttered my message of reform; and I was conscious of having learned by this time to know men

and women so well that I should have every chance in my favour.

I selected America, because I had suffered so much from the narrowness of thought and the limitations set upon opportunities in Europe. I chose to be born in another flesh-house, just at a period when many men, later remarkable in their lives, were being born. I thought that, with conditions so promising, I ought to fulfil my task. But, remembering that I had chosen unwisely before, I let my guides select my new flesh-house for me. This time it was they who chose unfortunately.

My father had some little money, which meant certain advantages for me, but had a narrowness of outlook which was the most serious possible threat against the broad work which had been my aspiration. He imposed upon me the career of a physician, for which I had neither taste in this particular life nor preparation in past lives; on the other hand, my philosophical inclinations had remained with me, ready to flower out at the first pretext, and fermenting and spoiling within me because they could find neither room for growth nor air for breath. My education was of the most superficial kind; I had not in my surroundings even any intelligent people who could help me to educate myself as others have been able to do when there was any one kind and intelligent soul near them to point the way. My preparation for my career itself was inadequate, and my mind was of such an analytical, conscientious turn that I suffered from the feeling of technical ignorance. Standing alone, I allowed discouragement to weigh in upon me, and gradually let go my hold upon the flesh. My earth-house was weak, and, no longer dominated by

will, was unable to govern itself. I took to drink, and died a miserable drunkard, making the greatest of all my failures in life, this time physical as well as mental.

Once more I died, and looked back. I had made three conscious efforts in the flesh to give a message for which I had felt prepared. When the body had been right for my purpose, surrounding conditions had been wrong. The fact that these conflicting circumstances had been against me would not have counted for me if I had neglected effort; but my efforts had been genuine, and they had helped me on though my work had remained still unaccomplished. I was not forced to return to earth, but was allowed to choose other means to give my message—the means through which I now address you. It has been difficult, because of fears and superstitions on the part of the public. But I have succeeded at last, thanks to workers who responded and believed: first only one, and now, through the untiring endeavour and unfailing faith of that one, many throughout the world believe.

But because of the fact that I died a drunkard, I have been able to withhold the poisoning glass from the lips of many wayward youths. I look back now upon those miserable years when appetite was master of my body, and would drag me from bar to bar as I drank the stuff that dulled my senses and deprived me of my little share of human intelligence. Poor, weak being, how sorry I am for you, and how I regret those wasted years! Yet I, and many like me who commenced with drink or drugs in a small way and then lost all control, are now guides to help others in the same temptations on earth. The great

evil in man, however, is not drink, but passion, and the defiling of the holy seed of life. Keep yourselves pure in mind and body. The mind can and will restore you, with the help of God and His spirits. The physical must not control your spirits or your soul; the three should work together, the body clean within and without, the spirit keen and alert, the soul centred on things of God. Do not be either afraid or ashamed to call for help. Do not think it is weakness. The greatest weakness is his who fears to acknowledge he is weak. No force is all-sufficient: no man can stand alone. If he does not need other men, he needs matter to support him and ether to surround him. Strip yourself of the unworthy vanity of believing none can help you. There are many who cannot; but they are the ones to whom you yourself owe help, after you have received it from those able to minister unto you.

But though we may not have the same temptations as you upon earth, we are still learning, as you are, ever seeking knowledge from the tree of life. Some cling to the roots; some are climbing in the branches; some have already attained the golden foliage. There are planes for all these workers, and, as I have told you before, schools for them here as well as with you. Patience may be taught in one school, virtue in another, and charity in a third. In all schools is the Bread of Life given, which sustains and satisfies the soul. Your thoughts are an essential part of your education. Evil thoughts can wither and blight, can be the cause of evil, and bring to early death the fruits which have not had time to ripen. Instead, think the thoughts which will develop the fruits of your life to their utmost powers of beauty and flavour.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

I have so far talked much about you, and not a little about myself. It occurs to me that you would be interested to hear the experiences of others than myself, who, like me, have been in the flesh as you are now, and who look back as I do. Their message will serve both to make clearer to you many points which I have raised, and to show that my statements about our conditions here, and my views of our former life and your present life, do not rest upon my own observations alone.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

FIFTH LETTER

A spirit's message to Dr. Coulter about his sensations on leaving the physical body—First impressions of the world beyond—His meeting with his mother, and her words about the knowledge which prepares for joy—Harmony and sex affinity in the universe—His meeting with his guide, and what he learned from him—The sin that found him out, and the beginning of knowledge—Another message on the same subject from a spirit who had shut himself in—The panorama of the life he had just left—The panorama of episodes in his entire continuity of lives.

I SUFFERED very little when leaving the flesh. I had the illusion of considerable pain, and may have conveyed this impression to those about me; but this was merely the relaxing of my muscles. All I felt was mental, because of doubts and fears. The body is only a suit of clothes to be cast off when it has done its service, and the grave is the wardrobe in which it is laid.

When I finally got out of my physical body, the feeling I experienced was of great relief and happiness—a feeling which has never left me since. My only sorrow has been for the grief of those I dearly loved on earth, and whom I have been unable to make aware of my presence near them.

I strangely lost myself just at the moment of death. I felt an inrush as of mighty waters; then all became dark, and I knew nothing more until I awoke to find myself far from the sick-room and lying on a bed of beautiful pink and white carnations, whose fragrance seemed to nourish my soul. The air about me was of wonderful lightness.

Several people stood near me, assuring me that I was all right. I surely was: I had never been so well.

One sweet face I particularly noticed; we were gazing intently at one another. I could not quite recollect it, though its expression was familiar. She seemed to be my mother, yet could not be, as my mother had been more than sixty when she died, and this was a young woman. Yet I was drawn to her by the force of a great love. I said, in a voice trembling with emotion, "Are you my mother?"

She smiled the old, dear smile, which brought everything back to me as she answered, "Yes, my son. I feared you might not know me; work and obedience to God's laws have taken the lines from my face and the silver from my hair. I had difficulty in recognising my mother, who had died when I was a child. But you will soon know that I am the same mother who always loved you on earth, and who helped you as your spirit struggled for freedom, while physicians sought by artificial means to keep you prisoner in a body you could no longer use. A heavy load is lifted from me now that you are here, where health and youth and strength will be your portion, and where public opinion will no longer cramp your development. You had a hard time to give your full expression in a physical body which did not respond very well to your bidding; but here, with no physical limitations to hold you back, your progress will be rapid. You are better off than many who come over, because your work on earth has built for you an ethereal body ready and waiting for you. Though you may not realise it yet, it is here. When you have grown accustomed to the change, you will never again regret the earth."

I pressed her hand and said, "Mother, darling, where is

father? And where are my brothers and sisters, and Aunt Eliza, and the others?"

She answered, "Father will soon be here; he sends his love. Your brothers and sisters will see you a little later; they are now busy on another plane. They have made rapid progress, and have not forgotten you even if they had to go on their way; they often get news of you. Your father and I waited for them and for you, our last boy; but this will not retard our growth, for we could serve by loving. If we are kept waiting very long, our penalty is rather harder work to do for the one we love, but we do it gladly. And now that we are all on this side, your father and I may go on, as your brothers and sisters have gone on, and as you will go on too.

"But we have been learning here, while waiting and serving. We frequently are in conversation with persons who have lived here for a thousand years or more. You see that man yonder against the tree. He has been here three thousand years. He is a man of great learning, and thinks now of trying another earth-experience. He feels that an earth-life would be of value if he could take into a flesh-house some of the knowledge he has acquired here. We are curious to see what he will be able to find. The trouble is, if he gets into a rich family he will not be able to do his work; and a poor family would be a serious handicap, as he would be deprived of the earth-education which would allow him to use his experience to the best advantage. The middle classes afford such good opportunities that they are watched closely and snapped up quickly. And, then, births are decreasing at such a rapid rate that I really don't know what we are going to do. If that man

could go back to earth under conditions favourable for voicing all that he has gained here, he would be a great power for good.

"Notice also that fair man just behind him. Yes, he is smiling. He wants to go back to earth to work out some scheme in connection with electricity. Many souls are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to serve in some way. Souls like these two have the privilege of selecting their physical houses; and, if those houses fail to work for them, they get out early in the life of the child. This explains many so-called premature and seemingly unnecessary deaths of children. You can understand that a spirit, recognising the importance of time, and having earned through previous work the right to choose, would not lose fifty or sixty years in a physical house which did not offer him means for adequate expression. The case is essentially different from that of souls who have wasted their lives in foolish endeavour: these are forced to go back, and are often compelled to do some particular kind of drudgery which they have tried to shirk; this continues as often as may be necessary until they decide to do right."

I said, "Mother, will I be forced to go back?" I already felt dread at the thought.

She said, "No, my son; only those who have failed to build their ethereal body are forced to go back, and I have told you that you have yours. If you really wish to work, and can forget your outer self, you can find much to do here, for yourself and for others too. Those who come over to us empty-handed and unprepared for the change need instruction from us—they are like children. It is for us to fill them with the knowledge which prepares them for joy.

But you have not yet looked to see where you are. Tell me what you think of your new home."

I had not thought of surroundings, I was so happy to be with my mother once more and to feel perfectly well. My body did not seem part of me, as formerly: the detached feeling was pleasant, though so new.

We were in a beautiful place, rich with profusion of grass and trees and flowers. A soft, mellow light bathed everything, as if the sun were shining from behind fleecy clouds which shielded us from glare and from heat. The air was balmy as on a spring day. Birds were singing, and I noticed a peculiar rhythm not only in their song, but in the air itself. I asked my mother what it was.

She answered, "That is Harmony, my son. Being so new to you, it will not be easy for you to understand much that I say. Here the vibrations of thoughts and actions are in tune; for the atmosphere is such that thought-waves are taken up, and sound and resound in sweetest music; as the wave-forces vary, so do the sounds in lightness and darkness of quality."

I noticed another condition out of the ordinary. The lake of pure, rippling water was so clear and yet so full of life that I imagined I could hear it breathe and also strike a note of harmony. I said, "Mother, the lake impresses me queerly."

She said, "Yes, I presume it does. It also understands harmony. Water, like humanity, has its masculine and feminine qualities; but here there is no discord between them."

I said, "Mother, do you mean to tell me that the lake is masculine and feminine?"

She answered, "Certainly, son; everything is either one or the other, just as much as you or I. All things are created halves, and must come together to make the whole. Discord comes on earth when two halves are wrongly joined. These halves, though physically together, may spiritually be millions of miles apart. Children born of such a union are necessarily out of harmony too, always thinking the wrong thought, unless they can make themselves see clearly. Very few on earth do find their right mates, and, in fact, they may wait here for thousands of years; it is not essential that they should find their right mates promptly. You are not put upon earth for ornamentation; you should realise that it is a privilege to live and to create bodies which can be used. It does not matter whom you marry, provided the other half be a good husband or a pure wife and devoted mother. Harmony is not the mere mating of souls, it demands intellectual understanding too, and the acceptance of responsibilities. Great unhappiness comes only when the mating is absolutely wrong, just as great happiness only when it is absolutely right."

"Mother, when we do find our right mates here, what becomes of our wives and the mothers of our children? Do we not still have a duty?"

"Son, while you are seeking your right mate here, the wife for whom you were not the right mate is also seeking hers. As for your children, you are only temporarily their guardians, the length of the time depending upon the extent of your love. Marriages, even upon earth, are a necessity only because of the present state of mankind; a man's child at this time must be legalised, or he will attempt to evade his responsibility, and society will approve

him in so doing. But while he escapes, the mother of the child does not escape, and so the sacred cause of motherhood, on which depends the peopling of worlds, must be safeguarded by laws until all men become honourable."

"Then, mother, since I have found you after all these years, it proves our love was really great."

"We do not make time from day to day and from year to year as important here as you do. Time's importance lies in helping to clear the way. Years do not bring age to us, but clearer vision. We see the struggle which each is making, and we are busily engaged trying to fulfil our mission of service, to ourselves and others."

"Mother, I feel that there is service awaiting me here. I was such a failure, I shirked so many duties on earth!"

"The duties you shirked were added to the loads of other men; you will therefore have all the more to do here, but will take all the more pleasure in doing it when realisation has come. But you must get the strength and knowledge first."

I was so charmed by the beauty of my surroundings that I could have screamed with delight, in such perfect joy and peace as I did not know could exist. To be in a world where I could do something—oh, the joy of it! I said, "Mother, is there no payment in exchange for all this?"

She said, with a smile, "Oh yes, my boy, we all pay by service and love. We help God to do His work; we are obedient to His will, and we love and live God."

"Mother, do you see God?"

"No; we feel God in the divine reflex and infinite knowledge more than in a personality. We feel that the ministering angels of the Most High God are ever ready

to show us the way. Every soul is helped to gain a foothold; then you must help yourselves, because it is your Life, and you must express it, son."

I said, "But, mother, I was taught on earth that if I were worthy I should see God."

"We do see God—in His works."

I began to feel weary; my thoughts seemed to wander. I said, "Mother, why do I feel tired, if I have no flesh to tire me?"

She smiled and said, "It is all your thought, son. You have so long been accustomed to being tired after hours of work that you think you are tired. The habit is still upon you. I will leave you and allow you to rest. You seem to think you need it."

I was alone. The inrush of thought prevented sleep. My brain was bewildered. All was so different from what I had expected. I longed for further conversation on questions which had once been so full of mystery for me. I wanted to know what had become of the vast multitudes who had lived for thousands of years before my time, and who had died as I had died. It was like being ushered into another planet, finding all different and yet the same. The desire to see and to know possessed me.

I was soon joined by a sweet-looking soul with a kindly face, who told me he had been my guide. I said that I never until that moment knew I needed a guide. I told him that if he had been hanging about me all this time, he must certainly be disgusted with me. I asked why he had not let me know, and so given me a fair chance. It was not pleasant to feel that I had been watched all my life; far from being grateful, I was resentful. I went so far

as to ask myself inwardly what business he had to dog my footsteps.

He had read my thoughts, and said, with a smile, "All souls have guides; we never work alone, we all need a helping hand!"

I thought, "In that case it was your duty to hold my hands. I don't see that you have been of much service."

Again reading my thought, he said, "We never interfere unless you go too far; then, we give you mental fear and shame."

I again said, mentally, "There ought not to be any thieves or murderers if that is true, because it ought to be the business of the guides to stop them."

He answered, "Yes and no. The guide only lends his or her influence, always for good, and with a thought to protect you from your ignorant self. But your soul is your own, and you have the power to harm it if you stubbornly turn away from the good."

I asked aloud almost the same question I had put to my darling mother: "What do you get out of such services?"

"As guides appointed to man we not only help our charge, but by constant contact we have a clearer understanding of the flesh and its desires."

I said, mentally, "You don't always seek the task, I suppose?"

He answered, "Not always; but usually because we have some work unfinished, and we are not ready to go on in spirit, or else there is no earthly body available for us. So we serve as guides, and get help by helping."

I thanked him for all he had done for me. He said,

"No thanks are necessary. I did not work for thanks and had not thought of them. I have enjoyed being with you. I believe you made a fairly creditable struggle, except for laziness; the difficulty was to get you started, but when you got started you pushed ahead all right. Your great trouble was conceit. You were so full of it that, where you succeeded even a little, you patted yourself on the back at once."

That was a shock to me. I had never thought I was conceited.

He went on: "With your laziness and conceit you would get into contrary, stupid moods, and then my work would begin—for during those periods you allowed me plenty of opportunities. You were a pretty big proposition; but I was told that all those defects which you possessed, and which I disliked so thoroughly in you, were my own to an even greater degree."

Light began to come to my dulled senses. I realised that this soul had been with me for the twofold purpose of saving me and saving himself. At the same time a strange, uneasy feeling took hold upon me. Would I be forced to become a guide, and be exposed to the same disagreeable defects in some one else?

The guide, reading my thoughts, said, "No, you are not ready. You still need to be guided yourself; and I am to remain with you some time longer, until you see conditions as they are, freed from the illusions which have been blurring your vision. Then, when I can no longer serve you, you will pass on to a guide better qualified than I."

I said, "But *you* have no guide. How do you always know you are right?"

As he smiled, I read his thoughts, this time, for they said clearly that this was a return of my old enemy, conceit. Then he spoke: "Yes, indeed, I have a guide, and my guide has a guide, and they all consult together as to the best ways for attaining results. We are not rushing through life; we are living it, because we are the universe."

I seemed to understand, though still part dazed, what this noble soul was trying to convey to me. It was as though a great light had been focused upon my mind from all directions.

Then my mother returned, bringing my father with her. I had no difficulty in recognising him: his face and body were the same, but young and vigorous-looking. I missed the limp of his left leg, which had been injured while he served his country by killing off the opposing party. A singular sensation swept over me as I thought, "That is not the Harmony my little mother talked of."

"No," she said, reading my thought, "we have no wars here, nor even rumours of wars. But the poor world from which you come is overwhelmed with war, towards which all this social and political unrest has led. It is really too bad to stop progress in that way. Conferences and arbitration are truly the solution, but they can become effective only after co-operation and brotherly love have been established within the nations themselves. But let us go on, son, for I have much to show you that will be instructive, as well as entertaining for you."

Just then a child came running to me, saying, "Father, I know you! I have often come to see you with mother."

My thoughts went back thirty years, to a young girl

whom I had loved for a few days, and whom I had ruined. I had heard that a child had been born, and had died. This, then, was the sin which had found me out. I hung my head in shame before my father and mother.

My mother said, "I tried to repair the wrong, when I came over here, by helping your child, whom I loved very much. You must teach her to love and respect you, my boy. The child's mother was not to blame, for out of pure love she laid down her honour for you to trample upon in your lust."

I was beginning to see some part of my work in the undoing. "O God, help me and teach me," was my prayer. "Dear Master, I have been here only a few days, but everything has found me out. I am going to be a child, and let myself be led by those who can serve, as they have been trained in the great school of human knowledge."

* * * * *

I had suffered from a long and painful illness, which ended in so-called death. Some months before this end, I had been told that there was no cure for me, and I had naturally turned my thoughts to serious subjects, trying to find possible proof of a life beyond the grave. But I made the usual mistake of demanding physical evidence of the super-physical, so that I did not get very far.

The life on which I looked back, while waiting for the grave to cover my body, was not a brilliant one. Circumstances had placed me in a position to follow rather than to lead. My only happiness, my only real companionship, had been in the days of my youth, and as time went on my chief pleasure was in thinking and often in dreaming

of the old joy and freedom, though I would wake to find myself shut in by four walls, and devoid of beauty and peace.

When the moment of death came, I felt a cold, creeping sensation, which began in the feet, and by degrees spread over the other parts of my body. I knew what it meant, and my emotions were strangely mingled with curiosity, while being quite free from fear. My last deliberate thought made me wonder if I should ever see and hear again. Then I forgot my condition, and all physical faculties seemed to vanish, as the whole of my life passed before me like a panorama. I saw my childhood, my school-days and sweetheart-days, my marriage, and the birth of my children; and each scene suggested to me the thought, "You didn't make much of an effort; you had splendid opportunities by which you failed to profit; you always complained of being shut in, but it was you who shut yourself in." It was the first time I had addressed reproaches to myself. And I realised that by merely doing my duty to my family, I had not done my duty to the world.

I was already outside of my flesh-house, to see so clearly; it was my own life, I knew, yet I could see it as if it had been another's, and was constrained to judge impartially.

My spirit left the body completely, and seemed to rise to a great height. I found myself in new surroundings, and saw many people, who paid no attention to me, however; they were all busy and looked happy. Presently I came to a group of men and women who were discussing new homes into which they intended to go. One man, with

fine, clear eyes, said to me, "Where did you come from, and how?" I answered that I had been ill for a long while, and had believed myself dying, but it must have been a mistake. He said, "No, you died. But we are healthy-looking dead ones over here, aren't we?" I was so thoroughly surprised that I could find nothing to reply, and he went on: "You probably feel, as I do, that the entire teaching of your life was wrong. I was a church-worker, and expected to come to a heaven all beauty and idleness. I was much surprised when I saw instead a region much like ours on earth, with the difference of the freedom we enjoy and the lightness of our bodies."

As he said this I noticed the lightness of my own body; I had been unaware of it until he spoke, and I now felt myself. My new body was of a rather solid substance not unlike flesh.

I tried to listen to the conversation of the others, but they drifted away from me and I had no desire to follow. Then a new experience came to surprise me.

I was face to face with a man working hard to cut down trees in a forest. He was happy, and whistled to himself occasionally as he rested; but another man stole up from behind and killed him.

Many other scenes followed; it was like the panorama of my life at the moment of death, with the difference that then I had recognised myself from childhood on, whereas now not only the scene would change, but also the man playing the principal part. I shall mention only a few of those that followed.

I saw a man of fine physique in a large hall, addressing many people and exciting them to riot and disorder. He

was forcing men of lesser intellect to do the deeds of evil from whose execution he himself drew back; his eloquence was such that he influenced them and stirred them up at pleasure. But suddenly, just as he triumphed, he was pushed from the platform and pounded to death by the mob he had swayed towards the destruction of others.

In the next scene I beheld a man past middle age, owner of vast estates and possessions, absolute ruler of many people, whom he governed through the fear he imposed upon them. He was slain by his subjects, who saw no other means for ridding themselves of tyranny.

I realised then that this man had been myself, and these other men had been myself in previous lives; that not only does a panorama of each life come at the moment of so-called death, but that afterwards a man reviews his previous lives also, so as to grasp the bearing of them all.

SIXTH LETTER

A spirit's message to Dr. Coulter about obsession—His grief because of the privation to which his dear ones would be exposed—His successful struggle to gain possession of a body not his own—His family does not recognise him in another body—He is discovered by the relatives of the body, who are strangers to his spirit—He finds the solution to material difficulties, and fulfils his earthly duties as well as he can—Death brings an understanding of his act. A second message on obsession, as told to Dr. Coulter by the spirit of a jealous wife who could not tolerate a successor.

I AM going to relate to you, dear Master, an experience which is truly out of the ordinary. It deals with obsession; but I furthermore had the rare opportunity of realising, at two different times not far distant from each other, the meaning of the word "flesh" and the difficulty which the spirit may have in holding on to the flesh.

I had a dear wife and two very satisfactory children; our home life was an ideal one. We were a sympathetic and devoted family, with the one great drawback—poverty. I had been out of employment for two years, when I finally managed, through friends, to secure an excellent post. This promised to be the means for restoring normal conditions and allowing me to pay my debts. I should be able to send my son and daughter away to school, and place my beloved wife in her proper position. Such were my prospects on earth when I was ushered into the world of spirits, with a number of others, as the result of an accident.

I had been killed outright. I looked down on my body, which lay in a disgusting and horrible mass. The awfulness of the situation dawned upon me, with my wife and children left penniless and alone. I had to go back. I tried to get into my body once more. But it was so mutilated that it would not work; it lay a limp and useless thing.

I was desperate, like a madman, when I turned and saw a man who seemed to be in the last throes of death. I waited for him to get out of his body, feeling all the while that here was my great opportunity to take immediate possession as soon as he got out. I started to carry out my intention. But he, too, had the desire to get back.

A terrific struggle between us followed. I fought like an enraged lion, and succeeded in taking possession. I found that I had some difficulty in making his body respond to my command. But after a few hours I learned how to manage it. Then my first thought was to go home and tell my wife and children that I was all right.

I rushed into the house, throwing my arms around my wife and assuring her that I had been saved. I devoured her with kisses—but, to my horror, she pushed me aside, saying, "How dare you—I never saw you before!"

I laughed, saying, "My darling, you must be mad not to know your own husband."

She answered, "I never laid eyes on you before. Who are you, anyway? How dare you come into my room and impersonate my dear husband?"

"But," I cried, "I am he, saved in the most miraculous way!"

She ran screaming from the room. I feared that,

hearing of the catastrophe, she had perhaps lost her reason. I sought out my boy, and said, "Hallo, Jack! how are you? Don't you know your daddy?"

He gave me a stare which made my blood run cold, and hissed out the words, "You are a crazy man."

Seeing my daughter, I addressed myself to her. She ran from me, screaming.

Why had I been saved? My family did not want me. What was the matter with me? Just as I asked myself this question, I caught a reflection of my new self in the glass. I had never seen that man before. Then I remembered the horrible struggle, and recognized clearly that, while I was the husband and father in the spiritual sense, in the body I was not. The body I was using belonged to another man, though it worked for me so perfectly that I forgot my spirit alone was the same. The different body was hence going to be the cause of great confusion and unhappiness.

I said to myself, "Rachel is very intelligent, and I can recall to her many things which she and I alone know. I can convince her that I am her husband."

With that thought I sought her again. Her room was locked, I could not get in. Also my son's door was closed against me. I was in great distress. There was no place left for me in my own house. I was as one dazed. As well as I can remember, I think that I must have roamed about for some days; I do not know where I slept or how I lived. I remember writing a long letter to my wife, telling her all that had taken place. She, of course, did not understand in the least; she was, in fact, crazed with grief, for my poor mutilated body had meanwhile been

found and brought home. So some days passed, during which it was impossible for me to obtain any further interview.

Then, to my intense disgust, I was discovered by the relatives of my new body and taken home. The man had not been married; doctors told his family that the shock of the accident had produced a wild hallucination. This is how they explained my conviction that I was another person. They said that with much care I would quite recover. With the exception of a few scratches and a slight injury to my leg, I was in pretty good shape.

Too disgusted for words, I listened to all this rubbish. Whatever I said only added to their idea of my delusion, which I understood only too well.

I learned that the other man had been very rich, and that I was the supposed owner of huge estates. I protested that I never owned anything. I told them frankly that I had had a dreadful struggle to live, to get food and lodgings for my family. But no attention was paid to any of this talk. All I got in reply was a sickly, sympathetic smile, as much as to say, "Poor thing, he is quite mad; it is hopeless to talk with him."

I saw the hopelessness of it even more plainly than they. No proof I could offer had any effect whatever. I tried vainly to find a way out of it all. I felt like a thief, living in a body that did not belong to me, and receiving money that I had not earned. However, there was so much money that the little I used for my personal needs did not count. Besides, the other man not only had neither wife nor children, but not even any one dependent upon him; his relatives were richer than he had been. So I

reasoned, to my own satisfaction, that this body needed attention which it was my duty to give.

But I could not get away from the great love I felt for my own family. In the distress and confusion which had followed my disappearance and supposed death, I had been able to come and go in my house very much as I pleased, had passed unnoticed among the many people who surrounded my afflicted family, and had at least been able to knock at the closed doors of my wife and children. But now order was restored, and I could not gain any sort of admittance. To insist, to force an entrance, was to challenge arrest and imprisonment.

Finally I said, "I shall court my own wife, win her love once more, and marry her." I arranged for an introduction to her, and tried to become a friend. But I could not conceal my great love for her, and she was very loyal to my other body. She told me I was too familiar, and she refused my attentions.

After that, I saw that I must get my desires under control. Gradually, by very slow degrees, I succeeded in winning her confidence and love. She would tell me every now and then that she thought herself very wicked ever to think of another man, when her whole love belonged to her husband. I would answer that she was quite right, that her love must ever belong to him. At these times a peculiar, frightened look would come into her eyes, and she would seem to be reading into my very soul.

My many tales about our past would disturb her also, and would cause her to glance at me in an uncanny sort of way, as if wondering how it was possible that I should know so much.

All this time I was, by various ways, providing means for my family to live. Lies, all lies! But they could not, or would not, believe the truth, and my children could not be left to starve.

Young people are much easier to reach than old; they have a strange psychic understanding, without knowing why. I should have had a very difficult task in winning my wife's confidence, if my son and daughter had not loved me. They were devoted to me, and looked eagerly forward to my visits. It is to my son that I owe my final success in winning my wife.

I had interested him in various works to which I had fallen heir, thanks to the occupations which the other man had pursued. There were notably a prison reform school, a home for orphans, a fund for the musical education of a limited number of gifted youths. Serving other people was a great joy for me. In my other body there had been the frightful struggle for existence, for food; all these conditions were changed. My life was one of ease and comfort. I could work for others, and I did so. I put my whole soul into these works, and thereby got wonderful results, especially among delinquent boys and girls. We readily saw what could be accomplished by education conducted with kindness and affection.

My wife accepted me, and we were married. We were like children in our happiness. My wife said to me one day, "You are very like my first dear husband, but I find you so much more intelligent and cultured." I said, "Yes, because I have a better house." But, seeing that look of fear return to her eyes, I said no more.

Thus life continued for some time, in perfect happiness.

Then I fell ill, and my spirit, not being in its proper body, could not hold. So I passed out, surrounded by my beloved family.

As I was passing, the same experience as in the former death took place. I knew just what I had done. The sin of living in a body that did not belong to me was made clear.

The real owner of the body in which I had been living met me. A second conflict took place between us. Again I won, but this time there was no returning into the body for either of us.

We spoke. He reproached me with living in his body and on his land, with leaving his property to my wife, so that his rightful heirs got nothing. I was disgusted to think he should so misunderstand. I had fed his body, had continued his work, had been bored by his stupid relatives, and had left to my wife and children only what I had won fairly with the interest on his capital. So I defended myself. But I already knew that I was wrong.

I acknowledged to him that my going into his body was prompted by my great love for my destitute wife and family; I assured him that I had not for one moment thought or acted selfishly; but said I recognized the injury I had done him, and so I would serve him and do his bidding.

We became friends. I served him faithfully for a number of years. And I was able to help him to find himself, through my own wretched mistakes.

We are now going on and on, helping and loving God in all things, and living God. Our sphere sounds and resounds with the harmony which prevails throughout. We live in a realisation of the perfect self in the image

and likeness of God the Father and Christ the Son, and in the fear of all things which means Host, not Ghost—a rainbow of lives and colours, of hopes and fears, where all nature quivers in the births and deaths which represent life in its highest and truest understanding. The daisies of the field, the great live oaks, the olive and the cactus, are one, all throbbing with life, all understanding life and living it.

I find that life on all planes, in all bodies, is one, as our Father's house has many mansions; and the mansion that will best respond to our message and unfold in the fulness of truth and love is the mansion that will live for all time, sending out for ever its rays of lights and colours.

* * * * *

It has not been given to many women to love as I loved; and my husband loved me with all the strength of his being. The word "happiness" sounds weak to express what I would say of our life together. We were entirely bound up in each other, and our sole regret was that no child had come to bless us. At last, after several years of disappointed hopes, a child seemed possible. We looked forward with delight to its coming, we planned every detail of its education, of its development, of its adolescence and mature life—little dreaming of what was to happen.

I died, and my child with me.

Unable to tear myself from the scene of my tragedy, I remained by my husband's side. His grief was terrible, and it only increased my own distress. I tried to communicate with him, but could not. So seven years passed by, he suffering in the body and I in the spirit, and I ever near without his knowing it.

Then he met a pretty young girl and married her. He told her honestly that, while he loved her, he could not love again as he had loved me. He acknowledged that the great passion of his youth had taken wings. But he needed a companion and a home, and was sincerely fond of her. She understood—but I did not.

All this rendered me exceedingly wretched. At first I could not see her; I could only know of her through his thoughts and words. Then I saw her, and was a little less exercised, though I disliked her intensely. She had taken my husband and my home, and there seemed to be no place left even for my spirit. I observed that when I went near her she would become nervous, irritable, and if I lingered she would be cross and unreasonable.

She did not understand why; but I knew, and profited by the knowledge to show my husband the difference between her and me.

He would wonder what was wrong, and would say tenderly, "My dear, what ails you?" But she could not tell him.

I found a new means for making her miserable and obtaining more control over her. I would make her look at my portrait, and would impress upon her mentally that she was a thief, that she had stolen my husband, that I hated her, and would make her suffer for the felony.

This succeeded perfectly. My efforts to annoy her were unceasing, and she was driven to being disagreeable to her husband, who at last avoided her, unable to bear constant contact with her moods and temper. I had triumphed, or thought I had. But she triumphed over me,

and in that one respect in which I had failed; she bore her husband a child.

I now hated her so desperately that my one thought was to get her out of her body. But how could I do so? I dogged her at every instant. I reached the point of control over her where she fancied she saw me in my picture; and the painted eyes would shine with the vindictive power of my own eyes.

This was too much for her. Frightened near unto death by the picture, she was fascinated by it so that she could not leave it. Now she was an absolute prey to the evil thoughts of my vengeance which I had been suggesting to her. Her brain ceased to carry any thought but that one, her spirit's hold upon her body weakened. She went insane. This was my opportunity. I pushed out her spirit and took possession of her body myself.

My husband was mine once more. Time went by. He suspected no actual change, but told me that I had become so like his Kate—my former name—that he realised that all his love had gone to her. I knew then that it was my spirit he loved. I had only to make him feel, without understanding, that he could be truer to my old self than ever by loving me in my new self—when death claimed him.

I loved him more than ever, and was left tied to a body which did not belong to me. The wife who had replaced me for awhile, and whom I had now replaced, had gone to the spirit world, driven there by me, and had left me full possession of a flesh-house which I dared not leave by violence, abhorrent as it had become to me. She now owned not only my husband, but my child in the other

world. I knew that my child would have met my husband on the other side, and told him of what had occurred. I knew, too, that he would have seen his other wife in her true light and her beauty of character, and would feel love for her alone. And I could not interfere. I knew, from having been a spirit and having taken violent possession of a house so that I had conscious memory, that I would have to pay the price for my crime when I crossed over again to the other side; and the added crime of suicide, if I attempted it to hasten the solution, would but increase my penalty and prolong my expiation. So, my thoughts upon my husband and child happy with the other woman in the spirit world, I had to live on year after year in the flesh-house, useless and abhorrent to me, which I had unjustly seized. And I could not even prepare myself by repentance, so firmly was my mind centred upon the bitterness of my fate.

To make my life all the more miserable, left alone as I now was, I had the responsibility of that other woman's child. I detested him and maltreated him. Neighbours commented upon the strange change in a mother's heart—once devoted to her child, now cruel to him. They fancied it was the fault of her brain, which, it was known, had been slightly wrong. There was talk of taking the child away, after the father's death. But the boy, who added to my misery by his presence, was now the only object on which I could vent my despair. I feigned slightly more kindness just to stop interference. He had borne my ill-treatment with patient resignation. My outward show of love deceived him, and he turned to me with the deep love which for so long he had smothered in his little

breast. I could not love him, but I learned to endure him, and I did not again maltreat him.

After years of suffering, my time came to pass beyond once more. I died. Reaching the other side, I saw the advancement made by my husband and his other wife, who were united and in whose life I could take no further part.

It was my child who acted as my guide, and taught me first to forgive and then to love. All there was to count a little in my favour had been the final slight softening of my heart towards the other wife's child. My lessons were hard to learn; they lasted many years, and then a new flesh life was required, before I had made atonement for the sin of evil pursuit and obsession.

SEVENTH LETTER

A factory girl's message to Dr. Coulter about her experience of death —The message of a wealthy and influential man: he discovers that rule can exist by the power of love alone—The message of the child who was called away: her mother was helped by the fact of having loved—The message of the spirit who, as a woman on earth, had encouraged her nephew in speed-mania.

I CAME over into the new country with many others, all victims of a fire which consumed the factory in which we were working. We were of different nationalities, and were far apart in character and experience. I, for one, had seen what would be called better days. I had a good education given to me by my mother, who made a great struggle with a drunken husband having no regard for his wife or for me, his only child. Though he was always besotted by drink, his credit was good; and, so long as he lived, our circumstances rendered it possible for me to receive an education so far as mere books were concerned. But nothing was given me of which I could make use in a practical sense; and after my father had died, our house was sold over our heads for his debts.

My mother sought work and found it, but her delicate body could not resist the strain. Within the year I had lost my mother as well as my father. The friends we formerly had did not come forward to help me. Finding no one to give me work, I drifted into a new country, and came to a city and to the factory which proved to be my physical undoing.

The fire started from a lighted cigar-end thrown into some trash. The flames spread so quickly that all avenues of escape were shut off. Those who were not literally roasted alive found death in the more merciful form of suffocation. But I must say that we were hopeful, without hope, to the very end. In that vast crowd of common workers there were many deeds of bravery and heroism. I remember seeing one man push out a young girl with his last failing strength and then fall back exhausted into the fiery furnace. He, with the others, got over to this side all right.

I have said we were hopeful; but, of course, at the last moment we all realised that we were face to face with death. Many were praying and crying; others cursed their luck and the owners of the building for tolerating such a death-trap. Presently sound was silenced and fear ended for us.

All were met by sympathetic friends. I awoke to consciousness to find my darling little mother standing by my side. Her face was smiling, yet her eyes were full of tears. She said, "Oh, my child, I tried to warn you, but you would not heed!" Those words brought back the dream I had the night before. I had dreamed that I was in a huge fire which consumed everything. But I had not understood the warning, for I had never seen a big fire, much less been in one.

I was so frantic in my joy at seeing my mother that I paid little attention to the others, who were being welcomed and cheered by their respective friends. It was some days before I even thought of my father. When I remembered him, I thought it strange that he had not

come with my mother and that she did not speak of him. True, there was not much love between us; my chief recollection of him was his unkindness to my little mother, out of whose sweet life he had taken all joy. More out of curiosity than love, I questioned her about him.

A faint cloud came over her dear face as she answered, "He is not with me, child—he is in another sphere. Poor dear! there is much for him to undo; but he is trying. I often go to see him. I can go to him, but he cannot come to me."

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because those in a lower sphere cannot visit those in a higher until they have redeemed themselves by service. He is doing well." She said this very cheerfully. "And he sends his love to you. He sinned against himself and caused us all to be unhappy, but it was through ignorance. He will probably be appointed near some one who has a weakness of the same kind, to warn and keep him from excess of drink."

"Can I see him?" I asked.

"Yes, but first forget that he had the power to make us unhappy. You must forgive, as he wants only good thoughts to help him. Remember that he did not know."

I said, "That will require a little time, mother. Just now I can't feel much love."

I am pleased to say that this feeling soon left me. We are a united, happy family, away from the evils of excess. That father is now standing out as a bright and shining light, of help to very many.

The fire which destroyed my body was the means for lighting the torch of my soul. All the thoughts of those

suffering and fearing souls as we were breathing our last on earth seemed to unite in a message which was as if personal to me. It told me that thought lives, and that fire or water, or other elements, cannot destroy. It told me that the facing of death is necessary for the learning of life. Only when we have passed beyond and find everybody still alive, and conditions not materially changed, can we feel complete thankfulness to God in the realisation of Life everlasting.

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By birth it was my lot to be at the head of a large family and the owner of vast estates. When I was about forty, important responsibilities were thrust upon me. My inheritance, instead of making me more helpful, made me very arrogant. I felt a singular joy in knowing that many people had to serve me, or suffer because they dared not disobey. I found that wherever I went men and women bowed before me, and in large numbers sought to oblige me. To some I was very kind, to others whom I thought inconsiderable I was indifferent, not bothering to be even polite.

I went out of life suddenly, and found myself on the other side of life, alone. No one seemed to wish to know me. The change was as radical as it was abrupt. I was the same man; yet before, all had been happy to know me because I was So-and-so, and now there was none to care. I was not insulted on this new plane, I was simply left alone.

I walked on, and met a man I knew. He bowed politely but coldly.

I said, "You don't appear to be over-glad to see me?"

He answered in an off-hand way, "Oh, yes; but I happen to be very busy. What are you doing?"

What was I doing? Who had ever dared to speak to me like that? I was about to reply sharply, putting this man in his proper place, when I reflected that he did not really matter, so I walked off and left him.

During some days, and then some weeks, this sort of thing happened to me repeatedly. No one seemed to care about me. It began to get on my nerves. I reflected, "Perhaps I have changed, and they don't know who I am."

The next time I met some people I knew, I went up to them and said, "I am So-and-so."

They answered, "Oh yes, we know you." Then one added kindly, "How are you? I hope that you are beginning to see we are important only by the things we do, and not by name or position. In Heaven there are no kings, or even rulers, except by the divine right of loving. To this they could never attain by the feeling of their importance."

That speech hurt me. I left without making a reply. I had not known that my thoughts could be so positive by the feeling of self-importance. But being now alone, with no one to flatter me, I understood myself.

I am glad to say that I am no longer alone. I am understood because I understand myself. And even should I be alone again, there is enough joy in my soul to keep me company for all time. I do not need to be entertained, for all nature responds to me as I to nature. The only power that rules me, and that I rule by, is that of love and understanding, which increases as times goes on.

I fear that there are many still on earth who have

the same difficulty as myself, and I will say a word in their defence. Sometimes circumstances so blind our eyes that we feel that we perhaps have a right; and besides, habit is very strong with most of those who give orders. They do not always know how to reverse the situation and take orders.

There were times on earth when I longed for real love; when I would willingly have become a beggar just to have freedom and to know if any one truly cared for me, for myself, and not for what they hoped to get from me.

I now meet many men who were once the great of the earth, and whose life here is spent in doing good and in the research after truth. Truth does not always make us happy, but it does give us freedom; and the knowledge of things as they are is worth any sacrifice on the part of any individual.

If only I could go back now in the old position on earth, and teach those dear people whom I love and who are still blind to the truth of life; if I could only make them realise how futile is all that false life, and give them a glimpse of the great life which will be theirs later; if only I could keep them from the necessity of undoing here so much that they do there in their ignorance!

Spoken words of love could restore much in the world. Do not rest content with thinking love and kindness, but express them, and you will help to clear the way. Faith, too, helps any man in power to become stronger.

I was indirectly responsible for the deaths of great numbers of people; but having sinned in ignorance, and with the thought I was serving a cause, I have not been

held back. My great personal fault, which I have eliminated from my soul for ever, was arrogance and self-importance.

Others have spoken of the panorama of our lives which we see in the closing moments of physical life. I will say that I saw myself clearly, but that was not sufficient to take the conceit out of me. Before I could come to my senses, I needed to be left alone. And then, as soon as I truly saw myself, great hosts of friends and relatives, and of men and women I had known, allowed me the privilege of reading in their books, of listening to their wonderful music, of gazing upon the pictures of their brains. Nothing was withheld that could make my life complete and bring a love greater than words of earth can convey, though here it lies about us on all sides when you are able to take it and honour it—and not before then.

Nothing gives us the right to trample even upon a worm to its injury; we must respect the rights of others. Rulers are necessary on earth and on all the spheres, but they must be given the power to rule by love. No man can afford to lose his soul in order to gain a crown.

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I am not very old, and have been over here a very short time. I died with my throat hurting me; my father and mother were crying and calling me. I could see them and hear their voices, but I could also hear other voices and music, and could see many children smiling upon me almost through tears. But I wanted to stay with my mother; her cries and tears tore and distressed my little spirit.

I made many efforts to make her see me, after I had left the body; but she could not, and continued to weep and moan. She would go out to the grave and put flowers upon

it. I would go with her, and would say, "Mother, I am not in there!" Then a beautiful woman, who is like my mother, would say, "Don't fret, darling. She needed your love and also your presence for a little while. Now, when she sees other children, some of whom are very poor, she will help them, thinking of you; and that will help you. Every day you can be with her; and as days go by, she will cry less, because life consists of other duties. She will be helped by having loved you before seeming to lose you." And then my beautiful friend would add, "I needed you to teach me how to love and to be a child. I never was a child; and I want to learn to play as children play. I was always ill on earth; my legs would not carry me, and besides, I was blind. I could see in my brain lovely pictures of children, and I would laugh with them—but I couldn't run or see. So I wanted you very much; and until your mother comes over, you must be my little girl and play with me. We shall go about and meet others who can help us both; and after a while it won't make you unhappy to see people die. You will know that God always has some purpose, and that He simply shifts the scenes to show you more of His glorious world."

Children of all ages and nationalities play together here; we go to school, and we talk to the things of nature about us, and they answer us. My dear mother would enjoy playing with us, and learning that all things can understand us. My father on earth works very hard, just making money; he never gets to play, except once a week, when he plays with a little ball, pushing it along and he never laughs. Oh, if I could only make him laugh! But my beautiful mother here tells me that he will play with me

some day, and that he will laugh as we do, being happy as we are.

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I had contracted the motor fever—that is what it is called here; and, whenever my nephew asked me to take a spin, I was only too glad to accept. There was not much difference between our ages; I was the youngest sister of his father, and only seven years older than John. John was the eldest son of my brother, and so inherited the bulk of the property. He was very kind by nature, and none could dislike this genuine soul, whose only fault was an absolute disregard for the personal safety of others. He had had numerous hairbreadth escapes, in his own car and in the cars of friends; he was daring, fearless, and had in himself a confidence which I shared.

John's first wife, Clara, died almost ten years before he did; he loved her so deeply that his grief was pitiable to see. He went about for more than five years, seeming only half alive. Then he bought a car, with which he would go out into the open, on long trips, sometimes with me, sometimes with others, but never alone.

Finally, he fell in love with the daughter of his great friend. She was a beautiful creature, and loved him as strongly as he loved her. Their marriage made us all rejoice.

John continued his reckless driving, however. He admitted that he had had some pretty close calls, as he said, but he was still fearless.

One day we went out in the car, as usual. John was driving. I was on the front seat with him; his wife, Mary, and the chauffeur were on the back seat.

From a private road leading into the main road a market-woman suddenly drove her cart right towards us. I screamed. John turned his machine aside, running into the trees. The shock threw me head first over the woman's horse, which, in its fright, trampled and killed me.

I did not know I was dead until I felt the swift cessation of pain. As for John, he had been crushed in the machinery and killed too. His wife and the chauffeur remained uninjured.

I saw John lying dead, and near him a woman whose face was covered with blood and whose clothing was torn. I thought she was too large to be Mary; and then I knew it was myself. It had all happened in a few seconds. John's body was being disengaged from the car. The horse was dying; the market-woman was screaming and bewailing her loss and cursing its cause. Crowds began to gather. I could hardly realise that I was dead; yet I saw my body.

John came towards me, very pale, holding by the hand his first wife, Clara. He was looking about for Mary and for me. He caught sight of me, and asked if I were hurt.

"No, not now," I answered. "It is all over."

"All over?" he said. "What is all over? I am not hurt. Where is Mary?"

"She is still alive," I said. "Only you and I were killed."

"Killed!" he almost screamed. Then he felt the pressure of Clara's hand in his, and he understood. "But there is so little difference in my sensations!" he went on. "I could not have realised that this is death; yet I see clearly now. That knock on the head did it. But what will be-

come of Mary, in her condition? Perhaps it will even be well if the child was killed in her womb; for how can she bring up a child alone? And all this caused by me, who wouldn't have hurt anything willingly! But I never could exercise common sense when I got into that car. What became of the poor market-woman?"

"She cares only for the loss of her horse and cart, and money will console her," I said. "And as for your poor wife, she will have her Father, God, to comfort her. I am more to blame for this than you, John; I saw the great risks you ran, but I felt an almost insane pride in your clever escapes from tight places; you remember, I used to laugh with you, and treat it as a joke."

Clara was standing by, a silent witness to our conversation.

"This had to come sooner or later; John was mad when the fever took hold of him," she said, with a sad smile, as I paused. "Machines are all right, but man must regulate his ideas. The machine should be made human in understanding, as it represents a part of the cleverness of man's intellect, and, like a man, a machine is dangerous when pressed too hard. Of the many who have come over here because of speed-mania, all are very sorry; they realise not only their foolish carelessness and disregard for others, but also their neglect of Mother Earth herself as they rushed over her instead of seeing her wonders."

EIGHTH LETTER

The message to Dr. Coulter from the man who looked back five thousand years: The gift of prophecy and its misuse—Morality in olden times—The principle of sex—The advance of machinery and warfare on earth. The message from a man who had made fruitless psychic research while on earth: How men put themselves in the light of their own understanding—Attraction by spiritual mental thought. The message of the spirit who realised that man cannot stand alone: The obligations of parenthood—Man is fitted for the higher plane only after serving worthily on the lower.

I HAVE been in the world of spiritual growth for five thousand years. I lived in the Far East, where great hordes of slaves were forced to build tombs with the labour of their hands. Walls surrounded the various countries to defend them against the bands of assailers from the north and west. The spirit of the real man existed in those days as in this day in which you live. Men within our country moved other men by love; no force was necessary—the various native signs governed our every action. Every household had its signs by which coming events were made clear. Our vision was not clouded; we talked with God in dreams, and singular manifestations would take place. This was because man stood nearer to the child and to nature, and more akin to animals. Dreams, in which animals mingled with men, gave portents which prophets interpreted with the help of books. Thus we were close to God, as prophetic inspiration can come only by prayer or by trances, in which visions reveal the lives of men by symbols. Yet we were not all dreamers; we were

88

engaged in many ways, trying to further the interests of our country or tribe—such pursuits being, with the labours of seers and prophets, accredited the most honourable professions among us.

But the divine gift of prophecy was used, after a time, to advance the personal life of either the seer or those from whom he expected reward. Prophets and priests brought the churches to a very low level, and men, though continuing to learn, drifted gradually farther from God. As the understanding of brother-man increased in some, the desire to use it to the disadvantage of others increased also; and so men sought cunning devices to get the upper hand over one another.

Man's regard for the mother in those days was very exalted, but regard for the wife did not exist; it was a matter of raising children. One wife could not supply her husband with his demand for children. Cohabitation did not exist as known on earth to-day; only the divine law for the replenishing of the earth was respected and observed. Education for woman was not considered necessary, since all that was demanded of her was to bring children into the world and to care for them. She did the work of the house, too, and her life was not unhappy; she was not only loved but esteemed, and prostitution was unknown. Man thought it his duty to have children and as many wives as he could support. Woman did not aspire to enter into the business life of her husband or sons.

As time went on, this began to change. The first moves towards new privileges for women bore frightful results. But where a woman has grown able to think along the same lines as a man, there is no reason why she should not

be man's equal. Where the woman wants to be simply the mother that is her divine right. But where the demands of the world have taken from her that privilege and placed her in another position, she should demand the same respect as a brother for the same work and understanding. Surprises in this regard await most of us in coming over to the spirit world. Here we find that the real sex is distinguished in the brain; that many now living as men are women, and many living as women are men. This explains why certain women can be wives, but not mothers; the mother-instinct lies deeper.

During the thousands of years I have passed here, I have at frequent intervals observed the changes in the earth-world. I do not approve of many of them. The world is no longer ruled by the labour of men's hands. Machinery turns out the same kind of object by the million; this may be all right, but it does not seem so, as I believe it does away with original thought and design. So man is no longer inspired as he used to be, and commercial considerations gain more and more importance. It is right that institutions should be operated on strictly paying bases, so long as each man benefits by his labour in the business. But it should not be forgotten that man's creative genius is brought out to better advantage by handicraft; by substituting machinery entirely, you risk causing atrophy of one of the greatest of qualities. Furthermore, the result of over-commercialised production, as it is now exploited, is a high rate on all commodities which makes it impossible for men to live as they seem to wish. There is much talk about causes. There is only one cause: too much profit being made. And there is a choice

of only two remedies: lower the living rate or pay higher wages.

The earthly armies interest me immensely. It is no longer a fair fight, being simply a matching of guns on land and sea. As for airships, they will accomplish one of two things: either do away with war or increase it. We believe that war will increase. The advance of what is called civilisation will destroy man's heart and natural sympathy, and he will more closely resemble the machine that his brain is bent on creating. Man has ever been as his thought has made him.

I note that now, as in my time, the same thought seems to spring up simultaneously in different countries. When I was on earth, as soon as one tribe took the battlefield, others were stirred with martial ardour, though far removed and having different interests at stake. So when one section erected a huge pile to commemorate something, or to flatter the vanity of some ruler satisfied at the expense of human life, all other sections were seized with a passion for building huge temples and things. Life was held so cheaply, then, that men let themselves be killed without fear, as death was not at all dreaded, but was almost sought as bringing them into the presence of the Gods. Great men would lead lives of sacrifice in their attempt to get nearer the Unseen. The world of inner thought was often much nearer than the visible world. We were not ignorant although not schooled as men are to-day. Their education would have been useless to us; we were educated by the things about us, and were led by the voice of God playing upon us by means of signs. Perhaps those of the latter day will not understand my message any more than

I understand what they are trying to do in their mad rush after nothing.

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While living on earth, subjects pertaining to the life thereafter had always interested me. I made a study of it, read books on the subject, and had a few personal experiences of a psychic nature. But nothing of all this was satisfactory, no one ever really told me anything of life on the other side. And now that I am indeed on the other side, I understand fully why this was so.

To begin with, when we first come over it is difficult for us to realise that any change has taken place at all. There is a difference in our body, to be sure, but so slight as to be scarcely noticeable. There is no age or illness, we all feel young. The plane of our life seems the same, only our ideas and our ideal have altered. We meet old friends and we make new ones, as on earth. We appreciate the importance of knowledge more fully than ever before, and each of us strives to acquire all possible information. Nothing seems to be beyond the reach of our earnest efforts; the whole of life is there for us to grasp, and we have eternity to grasp it in. Far from removing the desire to study, this consciousness inspires us, and we work as if there would be no morrow, that each day may accomplish its utmost. So all are happy in their occupations; unhappiness is the share only of those who have not yet waked to the opportunity of work.

The large majority of those upon earth are still in this latter condition, and thereby stand not only in their own way now, but in the light of their proper understanding of the hereafter.

Those who have brought machinery and material knowledge to such wonderful perfection will be surprised to hear that we work with instruments far finer than any men of earth have as yet conceived. We can feel the thoughts of our friends as they come to us from plane to plane. Thought-waves also serve to take back our reply. The wireless telephone, telegraph, and pictures at a distance in their present crude condition on earth, but which are considered such marvellous achievements of mankind, give only faint suggestions of the highly perfected means which are always ours to control at will. We communicate thus with each other as we please; if we cannot always reach those on the earthly plane, it is because they are still cut off by material barriers formed by their thoughts and prejudices, and across which they, too often, do not wish to see. When the wish comes, the barriers are already opened. What I say now is for those who would begin to see.

Perhaps this brief explanation will help them to understand what has often been stated about our spiritual existence, and which is called incredible by man.

All our laws have to do with spiritual mental thought, and we naturally attract those in harmony with our mental fibre. Hence, languages cannot hinder us, since thinking is the same on all planes. Place does not affect us, as by thought we can make the whole universe our home, and despatch ourselves in a few moments to any place desired. We can go for days without nourishment. Certain earthly animals have the ability to store food and go for months without fresh nourishment. That is one of our first lessons, as much valuable time is lost in mere filling.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

One of the things I was most eager to learn was the handling of my body with as little trouble as possible; I wanted to see the worlds, and learn all they had to teach me. Others who feel the need of rest can take it; others yet must busy themselves building the spiritual houses they have neglected, before they can travel from sphere to sphere.

A thought must work its way along many passages, each tending towards either decline or spiritual uplift, before it becomes a part of any one. Each thought that we make a part of us has importance in our life and our colour. The law of colour is as vast as it is interesting, and holds good with us as with you; but we understand its significance, and men rarely do. I would draw attention to only one or two facts. Some men learn to fight, and nothing else: their colour is naturally dark. Others go through life hitting at only the high places: they have a brilliant colour, with flashes that dazzle the eye and muddle the brain, and they must learn the middle tones. The best colours are gained by love, service, and understanding.

Those men and women who try to lose sight of earth while yet living upon it, and neglecting their physical bodies and duties, strive after spirit alone, are not meritorious, but narrow. They might as well strive to go to that place to which their forefathers consigned the evil-doer—hell, and their road is the narrower of the two. Many paths are needed for us to attain refinement of spirit; and those paths which we refuse to explore on earth must often be trodden thereafter.

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Ever since coming over here, and seeing both my real

self and the majesty of death, I have wondered why I had not realised these things more fully when still on earth. If those who are there now would only heed my simple words, they would be comforted.

They do not die, their friends do not die. They are all just the same, until they change for the better. Tom Smith is still Tom Smith until he makes changes in his thoughts, and takes hold of new and better ideas, creates higher ideals. If we are to progress, we must have ideals to work towards. No one wants to succeed just for his own sake. I am sure man was not intended to be alone even in his thought, and the heaviest punishment for him is to be left to himself for too long. He needs both companionship and exchange; he needs a variety of things to surround him.

If any one doubts this statement, let him try an experiment. Strip yourself of all outward things; rid yourself of all obligations, and you will then see how little joy remains. Man is an animal that needs companions. Every healthy man should marry and rear children, whose growth he will watch, and with whom he will grow. If you have no children of your own, take other people's children; they will likely be as much your own as if you had given the flesh-house, for in either case the spirit comes from God.

Creating unto oneself the obligation of children does not always mean complete pleasure. Some children may have the power to be disobedient or even dishonest. It will then be the parent's task to bring light to their darkened senses. If you have faith, you will be helped. God always sends His ministering angels where their need is felt. Remember that in seeking to solve the difficulties

of your charges you find solutions for your own difficulties. By learning that children require love, you will realise how greatly you are in need of it yourself. By this method you may even discover suggestions for some mighty reform. Do not stand off from the houses where you see men and women wasting their lives in wrong thought: go into them, and help them to find the right thought. Many children who are condemned need only to have the clouds lifted from their brains. Do not close your doors to conditions needing your support; be nurses and physicians of mind and body. People in health do not need you, but those who are destroying the beauty of their soul. You are unworthy of the name of man if you have not beauty ready and waiting to be offered. The old may need you as much as the young—perhaps your own father and mother as much as your children.

Hosts are waiting to serve you as soon as you begin to serve; and you will be fitted for the higher plane of life only after serving worthily on a lower.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

NINTH LETTER

The life of each day that prepares the life of the future—The three truths on which life is built—The importance of thought in its relation to vibrations—People become personalities through their power to understand and to express—Education or half-education—Men cannot be fed with the same food to produce the same results—The question of saving for a rainy day—Do not condemn, but bring light if you can.

TOO many wrecks are coming over from your world into ours. We want workers, men and women who have started work on their earth plane. It is very strange and impressive to see the different ones here just after their arrival. The conditions which I and my friends have been describing to you dawn upon them. They perceive the drawbacks of the position in which they have placed themselves, and they understand the dangers in which they ignorantly lived and in which you, their near and dear ones, are still living. They think they have made this great discovery for themselves; but it is not their discovery, any more than it is mine. Their thought is at once to go back and warn you; but they are not always prepared for that work, and you are rarely prepared to heed. Consciousness of the fact that these bars between themselves and you are unnecessary causes them keen distress. They know that we can help you to talk with God in your heart and soul; they know that by communicating with us you will learn to know yourselves better; they know that when communi-

cation is established with one of us, then it is established with all, and consequently the lessons of the universe are at your disposal to help you in the life of each day which plays its part in preparing your life of the future.

Man sometimes thinks that by science he has discovered the origin of life, or that by philosophy he has established the existence or the non-existence of life apart from the physical plane. But all he has succeeded in doing with his supposed learning has been to numb his conscious relationship with God. Give him credit for having tried, but do not voice great statements of which you are not sure; remember that they may have an unfortunate effect on your weaker brothers.

Daniel was an example of a great man who did not allow his powers of sight and understanding to destroy his judgment of the human plane; he ruled in the love of God his Father, and the lions were unable to destroy him. I will go further and say the lions never intended to destroy him, God took all such thought away from them, and their mouths did not need shutting because they were never opened to devour Daniel. And nothing can devour you if you have faith.

The great need of your world is faith—not faith in things that are unreal and will soon pass away, but faith established in your heart, faith in your inner self and in your own power to become Christ-like. Commune with yourself, and find out if you are ready to understand. Do not search the field of your soul to find its faults, seek its virtues and its strength. See yourself clearly, and develop that brother-love, that harmony which will transcend all things. Draw light about you and the

colours of understanding, clothe your spirit-soul in robes that will endure throughout all time.

I realise how difficult life is on any plane; but it is so chiefly because we find so many excuses that seem good, and that console us into believing that we are really going to act. But the man who goes through a physical experience always intending to do things, and never doing them, is not very far advanced. You cannot linger at the gates too long, because the keeper may close them at any moment, and then you will need another physical experience to accomplish all that you had only planned. If you have already done all that you can do for yourself, then you are needed as instructor for others, and you are neglecting your duty if you do not undertake it.

We all need guides, but we must also be guides. This is demonstrated on your physical plane as well as here. The mother is responsible for the early education of her child. If the child be a boy, then the father's influence too will soon be needed; but if the father's ideas have not evolved, then the son must seek for himself. Yet each little bit of help has its value. A bird's song which lasts only a moment may bring you a message whose effects will go far.

Universities are not required for the thinking soul; Nature in her many forms is teaching you daily, but you must be able to understand. The university offers you certain information gained by master-minds in the school of knowledge and passed on piece by piece to those who are ready for it; but if the doors of your brain are closed, you do not get the intended lesson; and even if the doors are open, you must remember that you will get the knowl-

edge in your own colour and not in the colours of your professors, because you must make knowledge your own, must see with your own eyes and hear through your own ears, and thus only can your personality develop. Then, when the information has become really yours, you must pass it on to others. Knowledge is not for one man, it is all men's. Lives are meant for you to learn a lesson here and a lesson there.

Eternity offers you the keys to all avenues; but before those avenues can open fully you must acquire the science of Being, the science of Understanding, and the science of Loving—the three fundamental truths on which all life is built. But beneath those truths, as their own foundation-stone, must be Faith, the faith which expresses itself in harmony, purity, generosity and charity. The sands of earth are the doubts and superstitions that spring from foolish fears, and the first storm will wash away such sands and with them the life based on attributes of sand. That life is then a failure, and much time must then be spent in unlearning and seeking a rock on which to build.

The only thing that places one man above another is the amount and the quality of his information; for man must know before he can enjoy. Children are beautiful in their innocence, but if they are ignorant through life then they do not live, they are no better than furniture, taking up space, air, nourishment, which might be given to worthy objects instead of to encumbrances. Each man has been sent to get a message, not to become a burden. If you have more than you need, then pass it on to others and prevent them from remaining burdens. Why own a dozen houses, when you cannot live in more than one at

a time? Money spent in idle waste is a crime, when there are so many homeless and crippled souls in the world. Put your less fortunate brother in a position to help himself; be his guide, do for him what others are doing for you, tell him what you know; but be ready to take his advice too if he has any worth giving. Do not stand off as strangers wanting an introduction; do not ask what class of society he belongs to. Who cares? Common thought is the greatest leveller. Advantages do not place men on pedestals, they only make men worthy to become teachers.

Life on any plane is as you make it. You can place your thought high and bring out all that is most helpful, or you can place it low and call to the surface only what is worst. The mind could absolutely control the body, if you held to the proper thought. There is nothing a man could not do in an ordinary earth-experience of threescore years, if he tried. He could be musician, scientist, doctor, lawyer, and man of business; not all at the same time, but devoting a few years to each profession. I should not advise it; he would do better to learn one or two things thoroughly and become an expert. I am only telling him what is possible for him. The universe is in his soul as in the souls of his friends and brothers; hence the influence for good which each may have upon all.

Since man should desire reformation not only for himself but for others, he must realise the full importance of thought, and make all thought-calls active and in touch as well as in tune with the world of vibrations.

There are millions of vibrations, some on one scale, some on another; their quality and quantity are dependent upon you, and you hold the key to them. But to make

them rapid and enduring, you must work. You have been told that if you seek you shall find, and if you knock it shall be opened unto you. But unless you put out your whole strength and knock hard, you do not set all the vibrations in motion.

If, therefore, you do not cultivate your power to think, you will not be anywhere in the future. Your day is the day of specialists in virtue as in crime. That is why I advise you not to try to do all things, but to get hold of one thing and learn it thoroughly before passing on to another. One fully-digested book is worth a million that have been skimmed. The information which our blessed Father, God, has for us is in our soul: go inside and get it out, and by your light let others see. Ask God to make you the instrument to serve your people, to give you work for them, and to keep on giving you work for them until all eternity. Knowledge is life, and understanding of the knowledge gained is like the dews of heaven that will baptize you in the Holy Name.

You must have definite understanding, and must know your own mind and what you think it able to accomplish. Do not be led by idle curiosity to investigate a great truth: investigate because you wish to understand and to be benefited. In the cultivation of the voice, you know that it must first be placed. You will find this to be true of the brain also.

When you stand still and do not do your duty, you retard not only yourself but others. Earthly physicians are clever in patching up a break or rent in your body; but when a portion or particle has been actually torn off, they can only help Nature to form a scar which will show

as little as possible. Nature herself cannot do more than cover up the wound, and even then not entirely; the progress of that part of the body is arrested for the time being, while the rest goes on, but gives some of its strength to restoring the tear. Similarly, your horse may not want to run, but your neighbour's may want to. If you block the way, he will force his way past, and perhaps break your carriage and injure your horse.

People become personalities through their capacity to understand and to make that which they represent understood. To unfold the beauty or ugliness of a thing means the uncovering of its real substance. The intellectual and spiritual prophets of your time do not do their work rightly if they shun verities. One man has said to me that the pictures I draw made life very difficult. I answered, "Life is not made difficult by facts. Life is difficult because you do not have facts, and because you cover over the truths that lie about you." Do not seek to get into the good graces of men in the flesh by catering to their selfishness and by making hypocrites of yourselves. Do not live in houses of public opinion. Only when real conditions are exposed can real progress begin. And we are all capable of amazing energy and versatility when we begin to individualise—provided we do not attempt to stand alone, though standing on our own feet.

But expression must go hand-in-hand with knowledge. Learn to speak well, to set forth your ideals. Clothe the spirit of your thought in straightforward language, keeping it simple so that the man of God may understand. The ordinary man's education is a question, not of a few years' grinding, but of a continual process. In the time you

spend at school you get impressions of a few things; but really to take hold of yourself you should devote to reading two hours at the very least each day. This will help you to a clear view and perspective. Study the lives of men and learn what they have accomplished; study science, philosophy; look into the early mythologies, and see what they have contributed to life. If the Greeks had any truth in their religion, try to profit by it yourself. Bring out your real man, educate him, teach him the lessons of life; and do not encourage him to create mental children without knowing how to control them. The *Titanic* was a wonderful ship with a very clever mechanism, fitted out with extreme care and utmost luxury; but she was a failure because man had made a child of thought without knowing how to protect it.

Colleges have not produced the thinkers. Very few of the really great men and women have been college graduates; they were the poor who received their education in the great school of life. Not that I am crying down colleges; no, you need more of them, and also more schools. But you should never cease to go to one sort of school or another. Do not think that you know all sorts of things which you do not know at all. Your ideas become antiquated. Nothing is so pathetic as to hear an old man talk of what he did when a boy, and say the world is all wrong. The world is all right, but that man has not kept abreast of the time. Progress has left him behind because he believed he had sufficient knowledge to last throughout eternity. Do not talk of what you have done. It is what you are doing that counts. Yesterday is not important. The Now is the time. Do not pauperise your brain in the

midst of plenty. Men, women, and children are dying—so-called—in every country and on every planet. Suppose each one were to come over with the conviction that he or she is alone right, and that only the family, the country or the planet from which he or she comes is worth while! That would be a sorry condition of affairs, would it not?

Education is so necessary that it should be compulsory—but not half-education. Schools should include travel, and notions of music, painting, and architecture, as well as literature. These courses should continue until the age is reached where memory will store away facts from experience. Much time is wasted in trying to teach all children alike. This will not do. Men have different colours and they paint different pictures. Some use sounds, or the sense of touch, instead of colours. When you get a group of boys and girls together, do not give them all plums to eat; some may prefer apples, some may be hungry for potatoes, and some may need only a drink of water. If your own child has a strange leaning, let him take hold of it—do not influence him away from his course. What if he is unlike you? Like never produces like among men; you are all independent individualities, you have been given the position of being a mother or a father, and your help will lie in the power to further efforts, not to hinder them. Fathers and mothers have rights, but children have their rights too.

Greatness lies in specialties; the time has passed when all men can be fed with the same food and produce the same results. We have different abilities, and each has his own work to do. Only the men and women who work, and do it well, are happy. Everything in Nature is working as it grows, and this process cannot be free from pain,

because it is a breaking from the old into the new. Labour is an honour, and the lower the labour, the greater the honour, if it be honest. If you employ a man or a woman to do dishonest work, then the responsibility is yours, and you have two crimes to pay for—the one to yourself and the one to your servant. But if you are a servant and are employed to scrub floors, then you must scrub them clean or you are not honest, you are unworthy of the work entrusted to you.

As long as the so-called inferior work of the world is held in disdain, and the party performing it is ashamed of the task, you can make no real progress. That thought will be done away with when social equality is established on firm rocks.

I once heard a woman, and a very good woman, say, "Mrs. So-and-So has developed social ambitions lately, and it is such a bore, because she is a hotel-keeper's wife!" Why should she not have ambition, if her education has fitted her for proper social requirements? Another woman said, "Of course I don't know her! Why, she used to rub my back!" Get all such nonsense out of your systems. Measure people by their mental and spiritual worth, and not by the clothes they wear or the rank they hold. If you obtain earthly possessions by means fair or unfair, your opportunity is increased, nothing more. Remember that Christ chose His companions from men of the common ranks, with few exceptions. A really great man or woman knows all classes, because in that way his or her influence is felt to better advantage. Cultivate good manners, be polite to all men and not to a few. If you want to be loved and admired, you must be lovable.

Another person said to me, "I don't like such a race; they are so dishonest, so disloyal, so insincere!" What if they are? It is their sin, and they will have to work out of it, if they still prefer to live in the dark while God's beautiful sun is shining about them. Be sorry for them, but do not talk about them if you cannot help them. Instead, talk to them, if you believe you can lead them towards light, work, and love. If they are meanwhile, living behind iron bars, let them be their own gaolers; do not you stand guard. Repress the angry thought, the angry word; look for the beautiful, view your brother with compassion. If you perceive his weaknesses clearly, it is your privilege to try to correct them. He will not resent it; or even if he does the first time—what then? You have everything on your side; good thoughts, if backed by firm faith, are always successful. All diseases are curable, even to murder. One of the best ways of helping is by giving a man something to do. If he is hard-worked, supply him with a little pleasure; if he needs food or clothes, see that he gets them; or if his life is one of pleasure alone, then find some work for him. A busy man cannot do much harm: he has little time for planning mischief. Begin with schoolboys, teaching them that love must be king, that we are all related, and that to take away anything from another, whether the thing be name, affection, or possessions, retards the progress of us all.

There are some who have no means for making a living, who are ill or uneducated, and who think the world owes them support. The administration of relief without removing the cause does no lasting good in such cases. You have yourselves established a poverty system, and you can

help the individual only on a foundation of self-help. The vast system of alms-giving, instead of work-giving, has done much harm. But every country should have a law by which the old have pensions. Many will abuse this law, as they do other laws; but no matter, provided you help one for every fifty over whom you lose.

Your work of the future must be by co-operation, to ensure living and equal rights. Socialism is a means by strikes and revolutions, but it is not a cure; it only clears you of one situation to create another perhaps harder. The law of mutual help is the only one which can be effective. The wonderful thought of Henry George, who is now on our side, about single taxation has helped the world by making men think; but it cannot take the place of co-operation, where each man works for the general good at that which he can do best. Adam Smith's thought for social economy was right, but, like Herbert Spencer, he failed to go far enough. Social harmony is what will level all things. Christ ate with publicans and sinners, because they needed Him. Why cannot you do as much?

No one rules by divine right, any more than by his individual self. If a man is invested with great power, he has great responsibilities—nothing more. If he is an able and conscientious man, he will draw about him men who can help him to make a great household of one country. My father's father must be my father; my brother's brother, my brother; and my servants, his servants. This principle must be applied in the smallest as in the greatest degree. No country can be ruled that is divided against itself. Whether you have a king or a president, be all for him, because unless he has love and harmony in his

household he cannot do his work; and, if he is lacking in morals or judgment, he does not need you to destroy him —he will fall of himself. The extreme Socialist view now being advocated will not change matters. Instead of coveting your brother's property, exercise judgment in the use of what little you may have, remembering that if deprived of much you are then relieved of much responsibility. Do not cast your rulers into a pit, because they might issue from it as did Joseph, the victim of foolish and envious brothers. He had been sent to prepare a way, and none can harm a man or woman who has really a great message; difficulties only mean that he or she will succeed the more surely.

Countries are like people: some struggling with the artistic element, others with the physical, others yet with the purely scientific. The spirit of revolution exists in various countries—China, Japan, Russia, England, France —each and all seeking liberty, while not realising that often more liberty comes in dependence and less in freedom. Freedom is not necessarily a good thing unless a soul or a nation is ready for it. Much that is finest is often brought out in subjection. Unless you have within you the real spirit of love and understanding, it is better for you to follow than to lead.

Many men are made kings. There are some whose ideals are high, but who let themselves be held back, and who become instruments for fearful wrong because of the conditions about them. Titles are man-made, and one man may have many such titles or names; but our real name is given to us as our work is accomplished. Kingdoms have been in the world for thousands of years, old countries

have grown young and young countries have grown old, and men have swayed millions of people by mighty rule —some for what they thought right, others to become greater kings and to have it said, "He is the mightiest of all." Rameses II. of Egypt was a great king: he caused a vast temple to be built, sacrificing life and law to realise his ambition. The Israelites were forced to build at the price of their blood; and so in China, the Great Wall was raised at the expense of the multitude for the protection of a few kings. Many of these rulers you call wonderful, and you are right; but in the building of their ethereal bodies they were failures. A temple cannot be raised to endure if it rest on but one foundation. And where great kings use their man-invested power to feed and educate their fellow-men, instead of raising monuments to their own glory, their position in our world is far better.

Men are men, regardless of their position as kings or civilians, poets or philosophers. The political Socialist who would like to better conditions by means of strikes or disorders is a dogmatic man who needs to learn true human sympathy, so that he may consider the rights of others. The rich man has his rights as well as the poor.

If you were to level all men financially, you would destroy ambition at one stroke. All rich men are not cruel, and some are needed to hoard grain as did Joseph, without whose foresight famine would have ravaged Egypt and Canaan, and the sons of Jacob would have perished. The poor man must not try to evade the law of life that he must work, just as the rich man must recognise the obligation to feed and teach and help, instead of squandering.

What you have is yours to be given, whether it be food

or clothes, or words of wisdom. A stream that becomes choked, and receives ever-new water, overflows the banks and causes distress and disaster, whereas a proper outlet would have promoted happiness and prosperity.

I would not advise man to impoverish himself by giving his all, for he thereby destroys his power to help. Give each day if the poor come to you, but work hard to earn more. No man can work too hard. Money carries with it great obligations; with it you can afford education, travel, comfort for yourself and those dear to you. But there are others who need all this just as much as you do, and who have not the wherewithal to afford it. When you count your earnings, there must be something you can spare, giving in reason. But be reasonable; do not either destroy your power of helping, or fail in what should be your chief effort—to teach the idle masses that a livelihood must be earned. Give to the poor in such a way that they may keep their self-respect; give that which will help them not only to live but to work.

Money is necessary. I try to impress upon my earth-friends the need for it. It is the only form of exchange man can know, so long as the earth-laws are what they are. Without it you can go nowhere; you cannot establish prison reform, or homes for friendless women, or further the education of the masses. The trouble is, that you want at the same time to establish general laws for which the mundane plane is not yet prepared, though light is coming. People no longer keep their great fortunes entirely for themselves—they found institutions, libraries, schools; where they do it for the sake of advertisement it may not do them much good, but it does good to those who profit by

it. I could scarcely point out one really rich man who is not doing something. The one I most fear is not the millionaire, but the near-to-it one, who is grasping, hard, unfeeling, and who excuses himself by saying there is no help for the prostitute, that there are not enough prisons, that governments are all wrong, that every man in office is necessarily a grafter: they complain of all this, but do nothing to change it. A great many do get into power by fraud, but it is the people themselves who create the conditions in which they live. You need now a man above other men, who will be above the power of machines: that will be the man of the future, whom you should crown and follow. That man is coming to you; be you prepared to understand him.

Man's excuse for accumulating big fortunes, stinting himself and others in the process, is that he must save and provide for the "rainy day." But, regardless of rain, he keeps on saving, until the habit grows and takes such hold upon him that he can no longer see his needs or those of others. He creates a large business, he builds huge factories on which sweat-shops become dependent; and poor souls work for him, earning barely enough to keep them alive, and boys and girls are turned into criminals, all because that man is anxious about the rainy day. And all the while it is raining about him—raining hell, and thunder roaring and lightning flashing, striking at the sorrowing hearts and the impoverished bodies that depend upon him. He does not see that his employees' life is hard, he does not want to see. He has to save for the rainy day. His sons and daughters are raised under the influence of this man, they scrimp and save their millions;

if they do give in so-called charity, their names must be attached; they join the church because that adds to their social favour; they become club-members, and know only people of their own kind, other slave-drivers and heart-sinkers. Thus children produce children. But where God has permitted such drivers to exist throughout two generations, the third He brings forth as truth-seekers. The rule is not applied invariably, but it is general, for those souls have had their lessons.

If any of you are driving brother-men too hard, relent, give them love, and let them live; see that their children have education, and are able to say that God is good because of your manifestation of Him. Remember that it may take centuries to undo what a few years have done, for the price to pay is heavy where selfishness wrecks the lives of others. Millions of lives on earth are wrecked by selfishness alone. Daughters are often kept from being wives and mothers because they are required to care for an invalid parent; and so they are left in their own old age, stranded, alone, at the mercy of the world. And the world's mercy to-day is in a bad way. When any are dependent upon you, remember that they must be provided for.

Man is frequently called over without a moment's warning, and leaves only intentions instead of provisions against destitution for those he had loved. This happened only the other day. A man had outlived his family and was very rich, was kind and generous, and had undertaken the education of several youths, while neglecting to make the will disposing of his property. At his death, a distant relative took possession, but refused to continue the

education of the young men, who had no legal rights at all. The old man was terribly distressed; he tried to return, if only for a few hours, to make everything right; but it was too late.

Another case was that of a brilliant woman, who had earned by her own talents a comfortable fortune; she had a husband whom she loved, but a mother who was quite the nearest to her of any one on earth. She died without making a will, and left her mother penniless, dependent on the generosity of a son-in-law who did not care for her. The woman, on our side, seeing her poor old mother miserable, and accepting charity, cried out, "Why was I not told?" But she was told.

Wherefore you should not scorn what you have because you cannot carry it away with you. If its service to you is ended, see that it serves others afterwards. You may provoke your downfall by the accumulations you make in a material way, but only if you allow yourself to be ruled by what you have or are going to have. It is well for you to remember that you entered the physical world naked and will leave it naked; that not one shred of clothing can you have here unless you have earned it by service; that only what you have deserved by truthfulness and upright, useful living can count for you. But do not exaggerate and renounce either ambition or desire for success, because, deprived of those, you would accomplish little. Just bear in mind that they are not worth the exchange of your own soul's advancement for them, or the advancement of other souls you would sacrifice for their sake.

Osiris was judge of the Egyptian dead, and each heart was weighed before him; if it was found underweight, the

beast Amemet devoured it. This was a curious way of saying that if in your heart the spirit has not found light, then life is destroyed.

Men are born into your world who are filled with the light of other worlds. Because of this, they exceed what you call a right degree of understanding, and you brand them as "visionary." Perhaps they are, but with a vision that has seen on other planes and in many colours. The man who does not respect such men, and listen to their ideas, is missing opportunities. But it is true that some men miss the opportunities which surround them daily, hourly. They pass trees without noticing them, without realising all that trees have done for the forefathers of the human race. The flowers, too, are overlooked, that bloom in their exquisite robes of red, pink, blue, yellow, and other hues gathered from the atmosphere, the earth, the sun, the water. Then the Sun himself, the father and generator, with his penetrating rays which get into the soil and give warmth and blood, causing the circulation to be free—the Sun himself is taken for granted by you. It is time that you should realise how many things are serving you. You scarcely give a thought to the very water you drink, yet where would you be without it? You seem to notice nothing beyond your body, or the small groups surrounding you, and you usually put yourself on top; and, if you do not succeed then, you consider yourself imposed upon. And perhaps you are, because you men are in the habit of imposing on all things.

Love alone can level such sentiments. But do not understand love as meaning you can go to your fellow-man and say, "I want a thousand or a million." No; be manly,

earn it; do not crave another's wealth. Somebody has earned it for him if he has not earned it for himself. Drive foolish jealousy from your heart as you would fear and pride. Be frank with one another, meet as brothers, though you belong to different generations. And you will then find that your age is not wrong, but all right; and that the difference is that some get more out of an age than others. In the most trying and desolate times of France's history, great souls were much in evidence, doing splendid things for their country and friends. Out of the stress of conflict, heroes are born.

Some among you will do all sorts of silly and unnecessary things in the thought of finding pleasure: go to bed night after night in strong drink, or nursed in the arms of unholy love, and consider that they are to be envied, that this is happiness. Others, yet, allow brother-man to suffer while they are buying up old statues of stone or wood, and will not see wherein they are sinning. Truly, none are so blind as those who will not see with proof abundant before them. But do not condemn brothers who may be less strong than you: bring them light if you can; they are trying to find their way, like prisoners in cells, or else they may be in poor physical houses.

Do not jump at conclusions, but be sure you understand before you condemn. Remember that silent witnesses are ever about, recording your unjust and untrue statements, which are often based on absolute ignorance. Men and women have been burned at the stake for such unfair judgments, and the lives of others have been wrecked by them. Yet you treat unfairness and untruth as light matters. Conditions are not so easily explained

away when you are face to face with yourself on that great judgment-day, which seats you in the judgment-chair to judge yourself, while the panorama of your life sweeps before you. None but you can pay your bills. I have now been in the spirit-life more than fifty years, and I remember the spirit-life which preceded my last earth-habitation; and to my personal knowledge each man has had to settle his own account. Prayers can help, as they are confessions of faith in a desire to take hold; but if you go on committing crimes, you must pay for them. Ignorance is one of the greatest crimes, as it closes the spirit and encourages pride, and from these as causes may come injustice to others. Who are you, or who is any of us, to get in the light of opportunity of fellow-men, to inflict suffering upon them or condemn them, simply because they may not colour their pictures of life as we do? Perhaps they have not the same materials at their disposal, or there may be thousands of other reasons for the difference. We are all children. Perhaps they belong to other cycles than yours, or to another race, and so cannot understand your special laws. Criticism or comparison cannot improve these differences. A pear-tree is not an apple-tree, though both may grow in the same soil, and be warmed by the same sun and refreshed by the same rain. You are linked in a thousand ways to different things, each one of which has its effect upon you. Some are children of the sun, or of some other planet; or else they may be at the beginning of their course, for souls differ in development. Our individualities are all distinct, though we are made after the same wonderful pattern.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

TENTH LETTER

The meaning of the continuity of lives—Why spirits wish to return to physical bodies—How a new expression of life begins—You were sent for one real lesson or message at a time—All things must be gained by work on some plane—The drop in the ocean remains a drop but takes on new ideas—Murder and suicide must be expiated in further lives—Some instances among Dr. Coulter's spirit friends—Souls have mates, but if you betray your earth-obligations you are unworthy of your affinity—A story about the power of real love.

THE principle represented by the expression "Continuity of Lives" is quite different from the idea suggested under the name of reincarnation, which latter means that man must return to the same planet an indefinite number of times to expiate, under more or less similar conditions, every fault he has committed.

In the Continuity of Lives every step is an advancement, whatever has been gained is retained, and it is because each life is a great lesson that many lives are necessary for a grasp on the fulness of life. But spirit, which is the universe, cannot be limited to one plane unless it be bound to it for having violated the high laws of that plane; and even such restriction would be temporary, for the effacement of that particular offence. The people living on Rhea at the present moment do not come from Rhea alone; they may come from Mars, Jupiter, Venus, or other bodies, which are all parts of infinity, as your planet is and as you yourselves are.

Just as you find out how a plant can produce its best only by trying it in various soils, under varying conditions, so our Father offers us many mansions.

Men of ancient times knew that many among the truly learned had lived millions of years, and that as God is a God of everlasting life, so His children are old in wisdom and young in spirit. Everything in Nature is trying to give you the thought of this old-new age. A fruit that is hard and green is not as luscious as one that is mellowed. So man, when age and experience have ripened him, and when the seed of his endeavour is ready, can ask for new soil in which to labour, in any field of his own planet, or else upon another planet, as he prefers. Man's thought for discovery and adventure has ever led him on to new fields and new ideas; the self-satisfied man who remains in one place may succeed, yet his scope will be limited. I remember an old earth-saying of my last grandfather: "a rolling stone gathers no moss." It did not appeal to me any more in those days than it does now in my spirit-life. I do not want moss, I want opportunity. I want to enjoy the fulness of life.

The great Master Architect has much to do to run His universe; and all are eager to help Him; but for this, each must get his part of knowledge and add it to other parts gained in various lives. To be a messenger of the Lord, to serve the great I AM, is a responsibility that takes centuries to attain. The object of life is knowledge, and the spirit is put into a physical house that it may learn by daily contact with other people struggling on the same plane. Only when it has learned to serve and to be friendly, only when it has gained the understanding of brother-love, can

it realise the great Fatherhood, and cease to transgress the laws of the universe, which are natural laws, as are those of the spirit-world and of the earth-worlds. One of your authors has written of natural laws in the spiritual world; he is right, nothing exists or can exist that is not natural, though its form may change a million times.

You realise from what you call the prehistoric, that physical man and animals have changed in outer form to a great degree; that man's evolution has borne him farther from the animal than he was several thousand years ago; that parts of your world show more cultivation than other parts; that the over-development of intellectual man leads him to delicate health and sometimes to utter disregard of his physical body; that crimes committed against the body exist to a larger extent in the old world than in the new, because the blood of man is improved by being changed; that no family has the right to intermingle too much; that variety is necessary; that old vegetable plants lose their value and power unless new and different plant-life is offered. You differ from the plant only in quality, and the laws of the universe rule you both.

You often hear the remark, "I did not ask to come." But you did ask to come; not to any particular family, perhaps, but for the privilege of expression which a physical house could alone afford you.

As you cross the islands of birth and death you realise that the object of birth is expression and the object of death is expression; it differs a little in outer form, but its life-qualities are ever the same. You have sunshine in the coal as you have it in the grass; the outward form and the manner of influence change, but the growing quality is the

same in both. The beat of the egg is no less life than the heart-pulsing of a bird. The wonderful Ego in man may have a thousand or a million houses and in as many climes, but the soul, aside from its refining culture and the knowledge gained in its variety of ways, does not differ. A man with no brain-culture does not look unlike the thief; the murderer may enjoy the same privileges in a material body; outwardly there might be no difference. The real difference would be in the soul-quality.

The eggs of life come together and spring into activity through friction causing vibration. It is like the striking of steel to produce sparks. When that flesh-house leaves the womb which contained it until it was perfectly made, it is ready for individual life, and a spirit enters in. If the spirit succeeds in breathing as the body is presented to the atmosphere—that is, if the physical body is properly constituted so as to make life possible—the spirit screams to signify that it is really in. There is difficulty for the spirit unless the child-body is perfectly made. On your plane, man and woman must enter into contract in order to keep true to each other; this is not the case with all planets, but it is with Rhea. While God is supposed to be brought in and sanction marriages, many of you marry for extremely unholy purposes, such as the betterment of your social or financial position. Love should prepare the building of the physical house of every child, since deeds of love are the most perfect. But plain, old-fashioned love seems not to be wanted by you, and the divine passion that creates real men and women is neglected. No two people should come together for any other purpose than to build a house for the tenancy of some great or simple

soul who wants a coat of flesh to cover him and allow him to do his Father's work. You are careful about the mating of your racehorses or valuable dogs, but you pay little attention to human progeny. You lead corrupt lives, you weaken your bodies by unhealthy habits and by over-eating, and you prepare trouble for the physical houses of others. Remember that the spirits of your forefathers are being brought back now, to witness that part of your physical ruin for which their lives may have been responsible. So have a care lest you be brought back, too, for the same purposes of self-reproach.

The spirit who enters into a physical life closes the door on his ethereal existence for a number of years, and begins as a babe picking up the threads of life. Momentarily he must forget all his previous experiences, save perhaps subconsciously, and even then in rare instances. Man cannot see too many pictures at once; he must be content with one life, one expression, for thus only can he benefit fully by new impressions. One cannot come into a new life full of old ideas, or, while seeing other worlds, be fair to the world in which one is living. So the physical body closes all past memories for the time being, unless you come back for one great lesson and are a Number Three, which means that you may become a genius. But all people who have in them the power of becoming geniuses do not succeed in giving out their message; conditions often interfere, and the brother or sister is left stranded through the utter selfishness of alleged friends.

Your prodigies or geniuses are often great souls who have come back; but they are not different from others, save in that they have greater knowledge. That is why

in a new physical life they may try for one thing and devote their years to solving or expressing it. The spirit of a man who has gained knowledge and the power of being never descends, as it is an immortal thing simply clothed in vestments of flesh. The souls of great men are still great; Plato, Socrates, Darwin, Spencer, or men who have attained a like place by their work on other spheres, change their garments but continue to work. The germ of life is given them for purposes of service, but it is so given to us all, and we must therefore unfold it, cultivate it, give it opportunity for expression. In the thousands of years man may live on the earth-plane, he may be kicked and buffeted into and out of many positions; he may know all the diseases of the flesh; he may be insane or oversane, and both extremes are dangerous; but life presents no terrors for a peaceful man on any plane, and he is useful so long as he is not self-sufficient and odious to his fellows. Man's spiritual growth is quite another thing; he divides from the animal and becomes immortal when he realises his power of being and hears the message God gives him. And though we have gone many a time through the double experience of being born and reaching death, which is one expression, I assure you that there is no grieving among us when we see a spirit about to undertake a new earth-experience. We say, "I hope you will do your work." For all we know, we may meet later, perhaps in the same family, on earth. But we certainly know we shall meet again here if we have loved one another.

You were sent for one real lesson, one life, and one message at a time. It is very rarely that a man succeeds with more than one project, and when he does, it is by

calling in the assistance of scores of other people. But who knows, he may be cheating, may be using the ideas of his kind helpers. If he thinks that by calling such ideas his own before the world he can make them his own he is greatly mistaken. A careful record is kept, you are given credit only for what you have done, not for what you have taken. The man you have robbed is striving for expression too, and his idea goes to his credit, whatever the use you have made of it. As for the robber, he will be held accountable, not in hell, but in service. There was an old saying when I was on earth, "Murder will out." That is perfectly true, it will "out" whether it be murder of body or ideas or ideals. It is much more serious to wreck a man's whole earth-experience by unjustly accusing him of crime or by stopping his expression than by merely cutting down the body. It is more serious to lop all the limbs off a tree, preventing its expression, than to cut the tree down and let the wood serve for furniture or fire: by lopping off the limbs you have deprived it of pride, strength, quality, and left it useless, crippled, misshapen; whereas by cutting it down you have freed a spirit which will find use for its activity elsewhere.

There is no such thing as chance or luck; all things are gained by work on your own or some other plane. Birth, you call circumstance. It is not circumstance. Where you have not selected for yourself, your guides have selected for you what has seemed best for your advancement. Money and influence are not necessarily the greatest helps; many fine souls have had their lives spoiled by the good things of the world; geniuses are usually born in the squalid surroundings which will force

all that is best in them to come out. What you term hardships are in reality blessings. While they are at times painful, they would not be so if you did not make them so. You have only to accept the facts of conditions, and seek means to improve them, instead of merely complaining against them. By improving circumstances for yourself and for others too, you would find life easier, because you would be in touch with God, or in harmony with all things.

What a grumbling, complaining lot you are! We on this side do not complain; yet we have not, as you have, great palaces and hordes of men and women to serve you hand and foot, and almost eat for you, racking their brains to supply comforts and luxuries which only render you more disagreeable and raise the wall higher between you and your God. No, brother, I see the uselessness of all this. But I love you in spite of it, for I remember that I was once as you are.

In all ages there are men who seem ready for nothing; but you do not help matters by standing aside and waiting also. If seeds put into the earth are spotted or have shells too thick for them, they will take longer to sprout, and any blast of wind may scatter them. These souls may have a bad flesh-house; or they may have been put on earth for the purpose of dreaming or thinking; or else they may just be getting their first glimmer of light, and several lives may be required before they can thoroughly awake.

We are all in search of new paths on land and sea and in the air; for new paths lead to new people, to new ideas of life, to different kinds of ideals.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

Some men's ideal of life is to keep their belly full, others to get their brain full. The belly loses its load, but the brain carries its load. All life is a chance, but a chance to seize hold of some thought; and if in addition to working we also love, we are able to help not only ourselves but others.

Napoleon did not intend to arrive at Waterloo; he intended to master the world. But his ambitions were interfered with because there were other Napoleons in other countries. There is always some one who can equal you sooner or later. You can draw up your plan and work towards it, but by furnishing the pattern you will have caused other plans to be drawn.

The great storehouse which is ever building and rebuilding constantly takes on a new form, a new light, a new colour, rising to a plane where new spheres can be attained and new conceptions born. Life in its glorious fulfilment means continual growth.

One woman said to me, "I don't want to grow; I want to rest!"

Poor thing! No one will interfere with your resting. Go to sleep and wake up in two or three thousand years, if you wish, and then start; it makes little difference. You only remain unimportant until you have done something to make you important. The world has been going on for millions of years, and many people, tired by the doing of nothing, have stopped to rest from their "labours." But they do not stop the others among us who realise the duties of life and the joy of fulfilling them. Tired people are to be found in every age and field.

It is not to a man's credit to live too many lives, or

to have been a king or a man of wonderful gifts, and then come back in an ordinary position to live a humdrum life. The very fact that he is back and working in the flesh shows that his flesh was stronger than his spirit-soul. Only in very rare cases do men go into the form of animals, and then principally as dogs or horses, because credit can be gained thus by service and fidelity. The fact of being a man shows an evolved soul, and so you need not go back. Yet many men in human form are really lower than many animals.

Although some of the souls born into your world have the great hope of leaving a message, some merely desire to live. There was one darling child who had had only a few years on earth, and who had watched her brothers and sisters play in the snow and on the ice without being able to join them. It seemed so wonderful to her that she wanted to go back just to skate and throw snowballs. With the consent of her guide, she went back into the same family. She enjoyed to the full all the sports for which she had longed, and she developed into a splendid woman who stood fearlessly before the world to give a message for her sister-woman.

This may sound strange to you. But we feel that your sports and games of all sorts are absolutely necessary for your fuller development. The boy or girl who enters with spirit into games, so long as these do not interfere with studies, is a better boy or girl, by learning fairness and honour.

Most real soul-spirits wish for hardship and choose places that will be difficult, knowing that refinement of the flesh is acquired by a certain degree of physical and

mental suffering. The life of man contains many parts. Sometimes he plays the part of fool for his brothers. Or he may have to find life in ways more singular still. Do not condemn him, however; perhaps you have been all that he is, perhaps he could find life only in sticky surroundings or in the byways of crime.

The new moon comes and develops into an old moon, and presently a new moon appears once more: so it is with the lives of man. At times the outline may be dim and shadowy, but he cannot stop living his life. Every form and age of life is present before man at all times; there are the old and the young, there are people walking, talking, singing, praying, dying, and being born; the drama of life unfolds itself on many scenes, swayed sometimes by the power of love and sometimes by that of hate. There are many shades of green in one view; on an apple-tree there may be many apples, but no two are alike; no two days are alike, and this variety of life is what makes life interesting.

As the curtain falls on one scene of a man's life, it may relieve his heart which was torn in twain, or it may cut him off in what seems his pride. He may have succeeded in filling his page and signing it, or he may only have made a X to show that he lived; but, unless he has really done something, he cannot expect to take his place among reformers and saviours. Yet it is the duty of each to help or to save some.

Death opens the door of the mind and sweeps the cobwebs from the attic of the brain, allowing man to see clearly the pictures that he has stored away: on that day he realises what work lies before him.

A child goes through many stages. First, a sucking babe; then he creeps and crawls until he can walk; he speaks a word at a time until he can put several together; he goes to school, his passions develop, and from childhood he passes to manhood, to a realisation of his physical being. Each child develops as the generation which came before him developed, and so men go on being born, marrying, dying, and the story of each life is told.

A drop of water may go into the mighty ocean, but, though mingling with millions and trillions of other drops, it does not lose its individuality; it only gets into a large company, and takes on new ideas. A frog in a rain-barrel has a very limited view of life; so has a man living in a small town where everybody is busy with everybody else's business. But remove to a large city and you soon grow weary of gossip; you get interested in the great questions of active life. You must be a leader, or be under a leader; other men follow either the strongest man or the man in the position of most influence. God is asked to take part in all manner of things—such as making it rain or stop raining, or giving good crops, or increasing one's material or spiritual benefits. What He does for us is to give us the tools, and then put nothing in our way to prevent our doing right and reaping the best rewards. But we must plant good seeds and care for them properly; for, if our seeds are rotten or we neglect them as they grow, we cannot expect complete success. A tree taken in the seed is none the less a tree, but the soil in which it is planted must be kept loosened and watered, or it cannot develop, and the roots must come before the leaves. So spirit cannot come into the physical before the physical is ready, because

it must act through the physical. The spirit, however, must discard its physical tendency before it can go on developing. Each is planted in the other; only their spheres of operation are different.

Man is often led by environment to do certain things, and commit certain mistakes, which cause trouble for himself and for others. You cannot disregard the laws of Nature, as natural laws rule all worlds; and such violations must be paid for. You may push your own spirit, or the spirit of another, out of the flesh-house before the ethereal body is ready for it. All spirits are not ready to pass to a different plane; if they leave unfinished work they must go back and finish it, or if they have built themselves no ethereal houses they must go back for the purpose of building. Often on this side we are no more ready to receive you than you are to come to us. You will then not be condemned for your act; your punishment will be to go back for another effort, in a coat of skin which you have not been trusted to choose for yourself. Sometimes a spirit, though sent out prematurely, has already done so much on the earth-plane that he is allowed to finish here. But you on earth are not able to judge of this in advance. Before you interrupt your own life or that of another, stop to reflect that you may be sending yourself back for a life harder than the one you would avoid, or sending another back, so that you will have to return also because you were responsible. If flesh-houses cannot be found for you, you and your victim may be earth-bound for a time as spirits. If you are of a high order, you can find work to do on the earth-plane while waiting thus in the spirit, so you will not necessarily be unhappy; but you are retarded

in your development, and so the price you have to pay will be only the heavier.

Remember that if murder is a crime, so is suicide, since your flesh-house is only lent to you, and you are responsible for it; it was given to you for a time so that you might do your work. The suicide is a coward who shirks responsibilities because he is afraid of conditions in the world, and forgets that those are the conditions of Nature which he, being from Nature himself, cannot evade. Your trials may have been heavy, but they would have been for a shorter time if you had allowed them to take their course.

One spirit, who cut short his earth-life in circumstances which seemed to justify him—or so he thought then—has told me of his experience in the following message:—

"A great love came into my life; I married, and had two beautiful children. Later, for a cause that was not known to me, my wife gave her affections to another, renounced her children, and left me. I was all but mad with jealousy; I could not get my thoughts away from my trouble. I tried to be fair, and succeeded outwardly so far as my wife was concerned; I was even so weak as to allow the wife who had defiled my home to take my children away from me. The final blow came when, profiting by my weakness, she turned my children against me, so that they would no longer see me.

"Life lost all interest for me then; I no longer attended to my business, which had ceased to matter; I scarcely ate, I do not know how I managed to live on. I wandered into foreign countries, and fell ill; I ran short of money, and tried teaching, with indifferent success. At last, to

end it all, as I thought, I shot myself, asking my wife's forgiveness and my children's love.

"Upon dying, I discovered that, far from ending my life, I had only started the ball rolling in earnest. I found myself, and the finding was not agreeable. I realised that I had been a coward and narrow-minded in my attitude towards my wife; we had not really loved, and where there is no real love there is no real union, so we had been given to one another only for a while. Her extreme disgust with me had come when I completely failed to understand.

"What has been hardest for me to forgive has been my wife's action in turning my children against me, when all I asked was to love them and provide for them. But if my attitude had been different, I would not have forced such a reaction in her. I see now what I could have done in the flesh.

"What I am working for is to overcome self, to prevent it from believing that conditions should be made expressly for physical satisfaction. I love as I have never loved before; happiness, the true happiness which comes from within, has been brought to me through work. Outer happiness may render life agreeable, but this inner happiness is all that matters. If all is taken from us, there is a reason for it: we may have been callous, we may need this branch of learning; if it is the death of a dear one that has afflicted us, perhaps the house would not allow enough expression for that soul, or perhaps that soul had been sent into our life only for a short time, to light our way and make us ready for other things.

"Too many men and women bring themselves to the belief that they can kill themselves and get out of trouble.

They cannot kill their real selves, and by trying to do so in cowardice or weakness they only make their reckoning heavier. It is only by fulfilling to the best of their ability their duties in their flesh-houses that they can build the ethereal houses which alone offer opportunities to spirit."

A child-woman came into our world not long since who had condemned her physical form to destruction. The pressure exercised by society had been too much for her weak soul; she had not dared to face the world in her sorrow and disgrace, though she was willing to face God. She was caught too tightly in the bondage of earth, and no one remained to her who loved her. So she gave up the struggle, her last thought being, "God forgive and help me."

Scarcely more than a child herself, this woman was about to become a mother, having loved unwisely. At first she had tried to arrange a life for her child and herself, but neither brother nor sister, nor any of their friends, were bold enough to face with her that which was termed her disgrace. Knowing nothing of the laws of the world beyond, she considered only the pain of ending her physical existence; and, having resolved upon death as the sole course left for her, she killed herself with her unborn child.

It was cowardly, yes. But how about the cowardice of the man who, for the sake of a few moments of physical pleasure, had ruined her beautiful life, leaving her to manage as she could while he went his way? Compare this case with those chronicled in ancient times. Remember, for instance, that Judah had a child by Tamar; he was not a coward about acknowledging it, any more than she; the seed of life was valued at its true worth; a child was a

child, reckoned as being built in the image of God, whether born in wedlock or not; thought was taken for the soul which had found expression in that flesh-house and which needed the growth of that house so that it too might grow.

The young mother was met by her own mother, who had responded to the call of love, though of selfish love, and who showed sympathy and understanding for the child's distress. The two talked face to face, nothing could be hidden between them. There was no criticism, no judgment; the child-mother needed neither, for she realised now her full responsibility in cutting off not only her own earthly life, but that of another which had been denied even the opportunity for expression. No house was waiting for her, and she knew she must go back to the physical plane to work. She did go back, and lived her full time; nor did she work in vain.

I have still another story to tell you, to show not only the uselessness but the sin of suicide. This time it was not a sweet, clinging, cowardly little creature fearing disgrace among her family and friends; it was a man, sure of himself, who had caused the success and failure of hundreds of men, who had wrecked lives as he would have broken twigs from a tree. His one aim had been to further his ambition and to place himself upon a pinnacle where no one could reach him. He wanted to control all money markets, to be their king; he wanted to put other men in a position to realise his power. He succeeded to a remarkable degree, while still pressing the life out of all others who were unlucky enough to cross his path. He would say, "I will succeed if I must walk over the dead bones of the whole world to do

it." But one day he was caught in one of his own traps; while crowding others against the wall, he had forgotten that even in matters of money there must be union. His castles crumbled about him, he found himself a ruined man, he had to eat the nourishment which he, as a lion of trade, had thrown out to his victims. He stood alone; he had no friends—those who might have been his friends had been only his tools; his wife had been a convenience, his children necessities. He had not loved, he had had no time to love: money was his only God. He had wanted money and power, and had got them but to lose them. He could not face ruin, and so he shot himself in the head.

He was quite as deliberate in the taking of his physical life as he had been in taking the lives of others. He died, and looked upon his body lying a limp mass upon the floor. His wife, his children, his servants came in. Then the horror of the situation stunned him. There was regret for him, but not the regret founded on love. A mighty oak had fallen; not a live oak, yet a huge tree, a man of might and distinction, a man before whom hundreds had trembled, awaiting their fate. Now his fate was facing him, under conditions where money could no longer serve him, where the only tools he had learned to use had fallen from his hands.

His wife and children remained alone near the body; he tried to speak to them, but could not. No friendly spirit had come to meet him; he thought of his father and mother, and wondered what had become of them since their physical death. Presently he found himself drifting away; he had destroyed the outside covering of his spirit, and had no other covering provided, so he could take

no hold. His spirit drifted aimlessly about; he tried to find his way, and could not; he was worried, and oh! so unhappy. Why had he killed himself, he wondered; why had he crushed all who came in his way? Reason might have told him that he must not go too far. After a time he had to witness the misfortune of his family: his wife and children were stripped of everything—they who had known all material comforts. He had been wont to satisfy their every whim, so as to keep them quiet and prevent them from disturbing him. "Yes, buy what you want, but don't bother me," he had kept saying; "I have no time." He had time now, all eternity, from which many hundred years would be required to wipe from his soul all the suffering and hardship he had caused others to feel. He began to think, to realise that he had had a message to give, a rent to pay for the physical house which he had shattered by a leaden bullet. He had been a coward as well as a brute. He asked himself why he had lived and what he had learned. We have no banks in the spirit, except one, and that is established in the Kingdom of Love, and all cheques are drawn on account of love for deeds.

What you often call Love is nothing more than physical attraction, and it disappears at the grave or before you reach it. But the attraction of soul and brain goes on and on. Men and women come over here who have had several wives or husbands on earth; the one who has brought the highest satisfaction in the spiritual sense is the love that endures. But half of your supposed men are women, and women, men. As I have already explained to you, the sex lies in the brain, and it is not sex but strength that counts. A woman may be as strong as a man if she

has had the proper training and gives herself the same duties. In the East, the woman does the hard work besides raising children, and it does not injure her. The organs of a man's body are just as delicate as those of a woman's.

Each soul has its mate; but if you happen to meet in the physical life after incurring other obligations, you must not seek to evade those obligations. If you have a wife and children, you must do your duty by them. Marriage is not necessary among us, merely because we do not need the ties of what you call Holy Wedlock to make us realise obligations. You show the most love when you fulfil your duty. All eternity is there for you to enjoy with your affinity, but you can be worthy of each other only after having done your duty. It is not love, but passion and selfishness, to desert your wife or to take away the wife of another. If you are capable of doing that, you are probably not capable of distinguishing between affinity and a counterfeit of love. Honour lives on all planes, and honour does not wreck homes. So you make a mistake in building for yourselves houses of regrets in which you will be compelled to live later. Remember that many who are just as good as you have never known love even for a day. If you have known love, though for a short time, remember it as a glorious experience. But do not seek to regulate the lives of others according to your own lives; you may control the action of their bodies, but you cannot control their minds. The brain has wheels within wheels, which grind out resolution or dissolution, and you cannot change that action in others, you can only offer them new thoughts.

I have a story to tell you about the power of love and the real understanding of affinity.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

Two souls were born into the flesh, but far apart, one in the Isles of Greece and the other in Egypt. They were in families equally distinguished. The Egyptian father came to Greece with his children, and there his daughter saw the son of the Greek. These two young people had known each other before in the spirit, and they loved at once. There was much opposition, for the customs of the two lands varied, and each father would have wished his child to marry in his own land. But the ardour of the young people's love only increased, they alone existed for each other; obstacles were finally removed, and they married and lived happily for some years. Then the young wife died; and he pined away, and died also. She whom he loved came to meet him, overjoyed at this new meeting, yet saddened by a duty which stood before her: she had to return to earth in order to fulfill her experience—she had to become a mother. He was not to go back; so he became her spirit-guide. He watched her soul develop from infancy onward, he loved her more and more; but she responded to him only in the subconsciousness, and did her earthly duty. She married, and brought up two children; then, having done her work, she was allowed to die and return to him she really loved and who had waited patiently for her.

That is loving—not to interfere with duties, but to help the loved one to be brave. Two souls are then ready to go on hand-in-hand through eternity.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

ELEVENTH LETTER

A Letter from Dr. Coulter given to Mrs. Scott-Gatty.

New-year greeting: its importance in its retrospective value—The need of love—Man's need of encouragement—The cure of self-importance and the understanding of right and wrong thought.

ACCORDING to your calendar, you are beginning a new year. Days of this kind are important, as they cause you to take a retrospective view over the year just spent. You are brought to realise the many opportunities that have come before you, some of which have profited you, while others at the time did not appeal to you: perhaps you were not ready for them.

Life is a school for knowledge. We get degrees in some of its branches, and in all of its various departments we are taught thousands of lessons that are well for us to know, which, when we understand their intrinsic value as lessons, save us much pain and suffering. We must pass through various conditions of life to fully realise the meaning of life, and why we are born as experience is necessary. Sorrow and joy are like day and night—we must have both, or we are not living creatures, feeling in every part of our being. Action always leads to inaction, and inaction will bring about reaction. All conditions must change, for they simply serve as phases that are meant for our unfoldment. We all have our

parts in this marvellous drama of life, and scenes and people about us are shifting: sometimes we are in the limelight as our beings are cast upon the screen; at other times we do not seem to be even playing the game, but we are—we have not come to our turn, but the cue will come if we keep our lamps trimmed and burning and take hold of life as we never have before. There should be a greater struggle as there is a greater need. The steel has been struck, and we need to continue striking it to get the spark out of it, for its flash does not always mean the slaying of each other, but it often is the torch that lights up the way to man's spiritual being. Often the man and woman who have drunk of the dregs of life are very ready for a great message, and have been trying to get it perhaps in a curious fashion, and may have become overwhelmed with conditions that have seemed to envelop them and which shut out their light and their power for useful service; but if they keep on trying and praying they will be successful, as success is built on failure. If a man does not try, how is he to know what he can do? It takes many efforts to make a success of the most minute thing, but golden opportunities are held out to all who are willing to wrestle with truth. The myth of the golden fleece that Jason sought is not unlike many of the myths of to-day. You commence the thing at the wrong end and you are bound to lose your way. You need no round-about way to find God and truth. It is not complicated nor narrow, it is the direct route, if you will but study your map of life and ask yourself questions as you would your neighbour, and be frank and open in the reviewing of your own life. It is all-important that you must first know

yourself before you can know others. Get a firm grasp on self and see your own weaknesses as well as your powers, and get away from the things that pull you down. If you have been a failure, there is no reason for you to continue to be one. You can and will succeed if you make up your mind to it. Opportunities are like precious gems: do not let them escape you. Push on to fresh endeavours.

Do more work than you have ever done before. Realise the honour and glory in work that helps to loosen the chains that bind and fetter you. I long for you to do well, my children, because I know that it means your freedom as well as your happiness; but patience and tolerance are also necessary, for you cannot love with your heart full of criticism for Brother-Man. Breathe the breath of life into the resolutions that you are making to-day, and join hands with truth and love, that strength may be given you to do the work that lies before you. You are all builders of the great Empire of God. He is the Architect, but you are laying the bricks and helping to bring the ore out of the rock of life. Great works are always ready for those who are ready for them, for the fulness of life cannot be demonstrated unless we put the full force of our endeavours into the project that we have in hand, and have a conscious understanding of the underlying principles of life.

Free yourself from illusions as well as delusions, and look your task in the face and realise that everything is real if you make it real, and that there are no dead, only those unthinking souls who are not awake to the glory of life, and who sleep in mid-day and whose dreams

are as unreal as themselves. They are not living in all parts of their body, and often harm themselves and others in their narrowness and creedism. They will not see, and they try to prevent others from seeing in their scoffing desire to hide in ridicule a science beyond their grasp of comprehension. They have not had sorrow or joy enough to make them feel. They have never gone inside, into the temple of their being; they cannot distinguish between love and hate; but their path will be cleared and light will come into their dense brains as the curtain is drawn aside for the sunlight to shine into their souls.

God's love is over all. Nothing is lost, as striving brings its reward, and if our environments are not helpful, seek to change the conditions that cause them to be distasteful. The chief cause for discontent is the war that is raging in the soul of man. He feels so aggressive and he starts hitting back, sometimes at himself but more often at others, and no matter how much love or esteem you might have, the steel must not be struck too often in the same place, as discord is bound to come: nothing will prevent it coming. We must make clear our lessons of life, and turn sorrow into joy and discord into harmony. When we all learn the value of love free from selfish desire, the whole world will appear in a different aspect and you will be indeed a living soul.

I cannot repeat too often what I have so frequently said, that we want to have more love for one another and get away from finding fault. Take your life as a great experience, especially now when there are so many things to be done to serve Brother-Man. In your school of life

many lessons are taught you, and you are hourly shown what to do to help yourself and others about you. We cannot all have high posts, and if we did have them we would not be ready for them. We must begin slowly to climb the ladder of knowledge; wisdom comes only to the wise.

In this time of strife, the greater opportunities present themselves because there are greater needs for service. Suffering and death make us all akin, as there are no class distinctions in death; it levels all men, for before God all men are equals. It is curious to read into the minds of the striving nations and to hear the requests that they are silently making—too often selfish ones for the preservation of their own country. They have very little appreciation of the intellect of the Father God who loves all His children. There are no creeds or dogmas in heaven, no set place for any chosen people; every man stands on his merit and his merit alone, and if you would treat yourselves as intelligent beings, and not as a special species or something different, and put hard facts before you, you would not be blind to conditions. There is no need to shroud truth in mystery: no matter what the real conditions of your life may be, face them, and if you have ambition you will overcome them. Sorrow and wars are necessary: man has ever been taught by such lessons. Ease and luxury often dull the outer senses of man: he cannot understand a thing that he has not experienced.

It is your experiences that teach you. The greatest men and women of your world or of any world are those souls who have learned value by actual facts. Do not sit repining and complaining; be up and doing. Now

is the time for application, to-day, not to-morrow; but if illness deters your physical effort toward relief, you can use your brain to inspire and direct others to do the work that you are not able to do. One of the crying needs of all belligerent countries is employment or care for those brave souls who have broken their houses in the service of their country. I hope that this will be made clear. Take the very highest line of thought and action. Make love and help your motto as you have never before, because the stress of life is very great; but love will be the candle that will light the way and all will be made easy.

We are busy in our world receiving dear souls, victims of your dreadful wars. They are coming over in such huge numbers to our shores, and their wonder and consternation at finding all the same, and yet different, amaze us. Why are people not taught that life on all planes is life, and that the conditions that surround them are due to the mental conditions of their own environment? Read your Bible. Truth is not withheld from any who seek with an open mind to decipher its meaning. Heaven is a condition as is Hell, and your sphere or plane one that you have made for yourself. You have many great men in your midst who are seeking to break down iron rules of thought that have held them in cruel grasp and which have strangled the life out of Life, and which have succeeded in moulding so many of you in the same *cast*. If a man or woman speaks out plainly you cry out, "Sedition! Traitor!" Who are the traitors, may I ask? Not the souls who offer themselves to sacrifice. You speak of men of the past, but what of the present? War is the time of great

souls, and you have them by the thousand in your midst. Every soul is a great soul. All he wants is love and encouragement. Cleanse yourself of wrong thought, seek good and good will come to you. No one can harm you if you have faith in God your Father. Read the 91st Psalm and be reassured, and you men of the East read what your masters have said. The message is ever the same; the interpreters get it wrong often, for Priest and Churchman have always tried to read their own message into the works of the Fathers. There is less of it to-day and there will be less of it to-morrow. International war means international peace, as it gets you better acquainted with striving nations and you see facts, but even with facts you need education along different lines. The arrogance of countries as countries must disappear before Harmony can be established within the nations themselves. We get practical lessons of it hourly in our world by those who are killed in battle and who are filled with one desire to kill the enemy or be killed. They fall in deadly combat, and as soon as their physical fails their ethereal rises and they are found locked in each other's arms. No country can divide them, because they have found their real selves and they have nothing to gain by possession; but neither have you, only you have not learned that part of your lesson. You will; you do not need to die to get it. It is all coming in a wonderful way, and you will alter your ideas of life. Tremendous changes have taken place, and even greater changes await you. We wish that those changes could all be mental and that they would spell Harmony and Understanding, and that indeed a new Heaven and a new Earth could be established in your midst, for the old must pass

away before you are born into freedom and can realise your heavenly birthright and take your seat at the right-hand side of your Father, God, as He has commanded you to be one with Him. There are no special favours for a favoured few, no chosen people, only those who love God and obey the commandments to love, honour, and obey; and that is coming, as I have said before, that there will be an invasion of love throughout all the world and the Kingdom with the King enthroned.

This great upheaval that is in your midst and which is causing mourning throughout your beautiful world is doing great things in the passions of the world and you are all playing your parts. Some are conscious of their acting, others are only beginning to learn their lines, and still others are knaves and fools. And then the Rulers: they are playing the game, some in the right, others on the wrong side. All great games are played by opposing parties. Your checkers become confused and are pushed to one side; then they are gathered again and a new game started, or, I should say, a continuation of the old one. You strike in another place, using different elements and new tools, and human nature is pushed to the utmost. You get snarling and gnashing of teeth, but you also get glorious heroism and valour that make the gods themselves proud of their human brotherhood. If you did not have wars, how would you learn to know the metal man was made of? Striking the steel is necessary. The animal is there and he is brought from cover and you know where he is, but even that snarling is an indication of power that has become rude in its overbearing desire to rule with might. They may succeed even to the detriment of Brother-Man. You

make rules and you demand that all people should follow those rules even to the destruction of their own advancement or the advancement of countries. Be satisfied with your machines, but do not make machines of yourselves. You are such glorious creatures, unlike anything else, endowed with the power of good and evil, with intellect to cope with all forces.

We urge you to be strong so as better to help those that are weak, but we love you in your weakness because we have also been weak, very weak, and we have sympathy. We like saving you from weaknesses that have caused us so much trouble and which have kept us from light and understanding for so long a time. Calmness and strength come to us when we have a glimmering of understanding of the uselessness of unspent thoughts and deeds. There is so much happiness and peace that could be yours for the asking if you would only find your real selves. There was an old saying in my time that we may succeed in fooling others but we know ourselves. I have learned the utter falseness of that statement. We know ourselves the least of all, and when we begin to look behind the doors we have kept barred and bolted we are not always agreeably surprised at what we find there—little devils' thoughts have been very busy. They have had no opposition whatever, eating at the very foundations of our being and breaking down the embankment, closing up the windows and doors of our souls and keeping us in the cellar, not even allowing us a foothold on the ground-floor of our real selves. Curious that we are so blinded by trivialities. We might see if our eyes were opened to the importance of it all. Do away with excitements and sensations, learn to live

according to the laws of Nature—beautiful Nature, that cannot be improved. Do not get out of touch with the universe that is yours, and let excitements and turmoils be the only things that will arouse you from the lethargy that you get into. Be keen and alert and alive, and enjoy the great throbbing world in which you live. We are disgusted with your *ennui*. You take it all for granted, without reckoning the cost and the price that you will pay. Nothing comes out of nothing, and nothing do you receive for nothing, and you have no reason to expect it. You usually get what you go after: if you seek fraud and disaster you will get what you seek, and this war is another one of the things that you have been courting with such ardour for a long time. You have got it, but does it settle the questions? No; it fills the minds of your children and they communicate it to their children, and their minds are filled with horrors and with pride in the achievements of their ancestors—ancestor-worship! You are all members of the same society. You never speak of the poor devils of your family that have failed—that is the skeleton in the cupboard. Curious how much your neighbours know about you, much more than you do, I I warrant; but their minds do not dwell on your good qualities—no, they fetch the old man out of the closet to amuse your friends and to draw comparisons, taking good care that the key to their own cupboard is in their own pocket, and then you smile and greet each other as if you were the best of friends. You are in reality; it is only the little devils of your being poking fun at you. One of your implements of modern warfare is to publish the evil qualities of the other, like the great big children

you are, instead of knowing that nothing bothers them so much as scornful silence. You let all your secrets out of the bag in your spirit of trying to be a little more pert than the other fellow. It would all be very amusing if it were not so serious and did not raise up such mountains between countries. We try to counteract it all by spelling Love, and by making you realise that those people who seem to be the instigators of this horrible war are but instruments that have arisen out of the constrained conditions of the world due to its unrest and strife. Do not blame anybody.

You are all at fault, some more than others, for as long as you continue to point to peoples of other countries as different and curious because they have not been hatched in your own particular incubator you are going to offend and cause trouble for yourselves as well as for others. There should be pride in the welfare of nations as well as your own national pride of country. You are all so different, and it is the difference that gives you reality and which makes you charming; and there is the other extreme, the man whose only thought is to pull down the government of his birth because they do not recognize in him the genius that he thinks he is. He is a tyrant of another kind. The disease of self-importance has struck him from another side; and then the other kind, who think that nobody cares for them—this self-pity that you go about expressing. If you would cease being so sorry for yourselves and be sorry for the other fellow, all would be so different.

Nobody is of the slightest importance unless by the manner of his living he becomes important either as an

example for the things that he stands for or the inspiration he is to others about him. The hardest type of all is the so-called Man of God that is holding up everybody as examples because of lack of his particular kind of faith, and who is satisfied to place everybody in hell who has another form of religion; for he knows that he has discovered the only direct route and that short cuts are unheard-of. He says, "Either take my medicine or be damned." A good many of those people are still going about, and when they die—because they do, and quite like ordinary beings—they are surprised that a special place has not been provided for them, for they think they have earned special rights: I could not tell why, but they are so convinced about it all that it is rather difficult for them in the beginning.

All religions are right, because they mean in their correct interpretation that man is seeking to find something higher than the purely mundane. He tries to find it beyond Nature, that is his mistake. God is love and is demonstrated in all Nature because His breath and His life are breathed into the nostrils of all things that live. We must stand *fearless* for the things we know to be right and just before all men. We must not follow any creed or any set of men unless we feel within ourselves that what they preach is according to our degree of understanding and whatever it is, if you are of yourself convinced it is right, then go ahead. The thing may be all wrong, but you have got to have it proved that it is wrong if you are a thinking man. How are we to tell without trying? You cannot dose everybody with the same medicine any more than with Religion or Politics. No one deliberately stands for a thing unless he or she is

convinced that they are right, but you ought to be allowed the privilege of doing your own thinking, for your brain alone needs the exercise. Some of you almost let other people eat for you, being so thoroughly the tool of other persons. Be individuals, do your own thinking; do not let anybody from any world do more than advise you. If it is sane advice, follow it; but do not follow blindly: mistakes must be made, and we must be allowed to make them. Great advance has been shown in the last few years and more independence. In my time a youth had no chance. Your father and mother might have been fools, but you had to follow. No wonder that there were so many generations of brainless people floating about; but that has passed, both have rights, Parents and Children. I see no reason, because a man or woman by mere accident becomes your Mother or Father, that they should think that you belong to them body and soul.

Be individuals, and if you are, you will love, as love is born of freedom and harmony. The child does not live that can love a tyrant. Youth is so lovely. Oh, if you could all remain children, and be natural and believe in the beautiful things of the world! Oh for a return of the fairies and witches that punished wrong and protected the good! A thing quite good enough for all time. You get so grown-up, so callous to all the imaginings of your soul; you are grasping at what you call realities, but are they? The only real thing is mentality, for that is unchanging except in its great resources, which are boundless. Difficulties will no longer be difficulties when you realize their importance, and nothing can make you unhappy and sad when you are firmly convinced of the object of it all, that we are in

the path of self-improvement and soul-culture that will promote our growth and lead us to an ideal, and that ideal, God.

You get into such dense clouds that you can scarcely be seen, almost like a London fog with its vapour and smoke which becomes congested and which excludes the sun. We know that the sun is there, but a veil has been drawn over it; but when the mist rises and all becomes clear to our eyes, we almost forget the fog until we are again in the midst of another one that blinds and hurts our eyes. There are many kinds of fogs, more serious than a London fog, that strike terror to the soul. When you hear the fog-horn and you do not know where you are until you have a sudden shock and feel all things about you breaking away and slipping into the icy depths, it is not unlike the reckoning that we are often forced to face when the change comes, unless our lives have been clean and free from mists.

We have questions put before us that we would like to forget. Very few know why they do wrong; they have had no real pleasure in doing wrong and certainly no benefit. The Hell of conscience is quite sufficient to keep most of us awake to our shortcomings. They may escape its pangs in the physical world, but there is no escape in the spiritual, where everything becomes intensified, either sorrow or joy, and we are forced to see ourselves, and we know that others see us and know us, for what we truly are; the vital question is ever the same, If a man dies, does he live? He does, and in every fibre of his being. There are no closed doors; he sees and is seen by all. We are not in a far-off country wherein

the things of your world do not reach us. We know of you, and we are making every effort in our power to make you know that our world is real, and that we are going on thinking and loving and learning the great and valuable lessons of life. We are not distressed by the conflict and sorrows of your world, because you must understand a day or a year is so short compared to the eternity that lies before you. For the present is the only thing important; yesterday and the to-morrows take care of themselves, and they come as do our days; some seem very full of joys, and others are filled with sorrow; they are but the day and night of our beings, given us to understand right and wrong as well as power and might. Love more, live more, and ask God to give you wisdom and understanding, that His lessons may be known throughout the world, that Harmony may be established in your troubled plane, and that peace brought about by the blood of nations may be established on rocks that will not again force the sacrifice of man in the flower of his youth. Let disputes be settled by arbitration and love be its key-note.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

TWELFTH LETTER

Communion of spirits cannot be proved by the physical demonstrations of mediumship—The nature of the messages given by high spirits—How the psychic must prepare for helpful work—The objection of scientists concerning identity—The duty of guides—The five physical senses of man, and the sixth and seventh senses—How spirits can get into communion with men—Attributes and their right understanding—The meaning of numbers, colours, stones, metals, fruits, flowers, animals, and trees, as attributes.

SCIENCE has proved many things, but it will never establish spiritual understanding by the physical demonstrations of mediumship. The supposed proofs of eternal life gathered thus will not be proofs.

What is it to be able to tell the name of somebody's grandmother, or the date of a birth or death, or the number of a watch, or a communication which coincides with another from some other part of the world? A man can do the same thing without the help of any spirit. But the essential consideration is: What is the importance of all this, and what can it do for you? If a spirit who claims to be above you on a conscious plane continues to talk about watches and grandmothers, then he has not found himself, he is not released from his outer self. He is no friend worth cultivating; nor is the spirit who helps you to find your pearl necklace, or to locate mines, or to bring you a husband or a wife. They are lowering themselves by such work, they are debasing God's message; and the mediums who establish this sort of connection

between the visible world and the invisible world are no better than the spirits employed in low missions. The sooner people do away with that class of work, and seek out the psychic through whom helpful messages are given, the better it will be for the world.

The message of the high spirit speaking through a psychic is that no man dies, that he only changes his garment, the physical coat for the ethereal; that time is only counted by what is accomplished, and stains are not left unless your colour is all dark; that you must love all your brothers and sisters, must help the poor and heal the sick, must cure others of such diseases as theft, drink, crime.

But all on earth are not yet ready to hear such messages. Some ask for help from spirits without really wanting it; they may not know what is good for them; and, should help be given prematurely, it would only weaken them, and unfit them for facing responsibilities, and for the object of life, which is gathering knowledge through experience. Others seek spirits for ordinary advice of a purely material kind, and go to a medium who will supply any possible information for a price. No high spirit would choose a medium of that sort for a worker. Not that it is a sin to take money; but the spirit himself should be consulted to know if there is a message for this particular man or woman; and, if there is not, no high spirit will give his time for considerations of money or anything else.

Each man is his own keeper and holds his own key. Test yourselves and any giver of information; take no message that is not of God. Do not believe in miracles.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

There are no miracles: what seem to be such are only truths. Life is life on any plane, and there is no supernatural, since all is natural, all is Nature.

The physical can no more bar thought than the spiritual can deny the power of the material world. You can no more cut yourselves off from other forms of life than you can stop breathing. We are all related; everything in life affects us all, as we all belong to everything. Man has always been, and always will be; but so has all other life always existed, and so it will always exist. A thing that has had a beginning must have an end; but man has had no beginning, he was only put into a physical form so as to bring forth fruit and show his works. Even your flesh bodies respond to conditions of earth and atmosphere; and our ethereal bodies, while belonging especially to the ether, and being of finer substance than yours—so that we do not suffer from extremes of heat or cold—feel your earthly atmosphere when we come into it for your sakes, and so we must have fresh air. We have a sense of stifling when we come into a closed room; and when we can speak to a friend who understands, we may say, in your own words, "Open a window—I can't breathe!"

We must also have a moral atmosphere of repose and concentration. Otherwise, agitated waves are sent out which either prevent us from communicating, or may even prevent us from approaching at all.

I remember, in this connection, the case of a psychic of a particularly high order, with whom a high spirit was in the habit of communicating. Her little boy strayed away from home one day; he was perfectly safe, and there was no occasion for the spirit to worry about him; but when

the mother noticed that he was missing, she at once grew so agitated that the spirit could no longer tell her all was well. For hours she endured untold agonies, telephoning and telegraphing in all conceivable directions, sending for all her friends in physical houses to help in the search, and calling on her ethereal friends to help too. We were standing near, prevented by her state of mind from communicating with her and telling her where the child lay, safe and sound, by a roadside, asleep, after a long country walk he had undertaken for his solitary amusement. Later, she reproached her spirit friends with not having come to the rescue, and having allowed her to suffer for so long a time quite unnecessarily. They answered that she could have communicated with them at once, and known where her child was, if she had only remained calm instead of losing her head.

The psychic who would do truly useful work must prepare himself or herself by means of general education, helping him or her to grasp the vast conditions of life. The more vividly a psychic sees, the more the friend in the spirit is helped. Whenever a psychic finds that his spirit friends are deeply interested in some subject, he studies that subject himself, because a high and pure message must find unobstructed channels to run through. The broader an artist's knowledge of art, the greater will be the scope of his own work. So it is with the psychic's work. If you use a bad, scratching pen, you cannot write clearly; so, if a spirit tries to reach you through the medium of a person mentally unfit to convey the desired message, do not blame either the spirit or the instrument, but find a better instrument and avoid confusion.

Furthermore, while we can see your ethereal condition, though you do not see it—because it is our plane, and not your present one—we may need your judgment of strictly material things. We are sensitive through your physical senses; we use your brains to understand details of earth-questions which have arisen since we left the flesh; and we borrow your eyes to look at the matter surrounding you. Hence, the more sensitive and the more intelligent the psychic, the better and the sounder will be the work of the spirit.

The great mass of people in your world to-day believe in the return of spirits, and believe this intelligently, not superstitiously, as they did some generations ago. For thousands of years workers have been asking the question, "Does the soul return—and, if so, for what purpose?"

My claim is that it is to help man by showing how important to human advance is a correct life; how evil must be avoided, not only because good is preferable but because evil is discord, because it distorts God's message, gets your wires twisted, and affects you and others too. That is why messages should be taken seriously, and only God-fearing psychics should be encouraged, instead of others who play to the gallery and sell trivial advice. Mediums have done good, and spiritualism has caused progress in the world, but it is the duty of all to stand up fearlessly and disclaim whatever does not mean help. Who among us cares if the wheat crops of the world fail, or if there are no pearl necklaces or love potions? What you first need to do is to reject such messages, which do nothing to raise your spiritual and moral tendencies. Get aside from your carnal

self, and realise that life on any plane is a serious thing, that we are helpers and God's children, and that there are tremendous things still to be done for the world. Never seek a personal communication with a spirit unless you intend to use it for others as well as for yourself. Higher spirits take no interest in selfish desires, and they will live on this side without communicating with you, unless they can exercise an influence. Therefore it is, that what we arrive at finally is peace and understanding with God in the fulness of love and Harmony. If you find this difficult, although you try to attain it, it is because other efforts besides your own are needed to bring about the conscious union with God. But when you have once attained it, you are above all destruction and sin, they cannot touch you.

One of the objections raised by scientists is that our identity is not always clearly proved. But you must learn to distinguish among proofs. A man in our world must be reached through the spiritual, or he is not seriously reached. The right means are at your disposal, since you yourself were spirit before entering your flesh-house. The magnificent city of the universe is not always according to the mental understanding of physical or super-physical man. Only this new-old language, when firmly established, can render complete reconciliation possible. The religion of the future is the firm belief in the continuity of lives as the normal life after, as before, so-called death.

Before attempting to pass judgment upon a question so vital, study the lives of men in former ages, and learn what they accomplished: learn art, science, philosophy; look into the early mythologies, and see what they may

have contributed to life; if the Greeks, for instance, had any truth in their religion, there is no reason why you should not profit by it. Science has helped you by trying to discover the origin of man. Darwin was on the right track; Helmholtz's Sensation of Tone was a clever idea; all books on the line of Evolution will help you. Do not read books only to substantiate your own ideas; read books contrary to them as well, and come to an honest conclusion. Bring out your real man, educate him, teach him the lessons of life; and do not let him create mental children that he does not know how to control. The *Titanic* was a wonderful ship and a clever mechanism, fitted out with extreme care and the utmost luxury; but she was a failure because man had made a child of thought without knowing how to protect it. You will reach no sound conclusions about the conditions of universal life until your education has brought you to the point of realising that the spiritual laws used by man are not dependent merely upon manifestations in his physical-spiritual existence.

The negative proofs which you produce against the presence of man's soul and spirit are singularly unconvincing, if you would only pause to reflect. It is true that you cannot see spirit; but you cannot see the love you feel or the air you breathe, although you acknowledge their existence. You accept the word of man on subjects far less vital, and yet you treat the return of spirits as something extraordinary. Why should a plane on which we have lived cease to interest us and attract us just because a physical lamp has been blown out? Why, our loves are intensified as our being is intensified. We may not speak with the same directness about mundane affairs; we may

not even take notice if some one asks us about a trivial thing. It is of no importance to us whether Mr. Brown does or does not go down-town. What does matter is that we may be able to prevent a man from rushing to moral ruin.

Guides or friends take hold of a life because of love and a desire to help, not by flattering but by telling you mentally how the greatest good may be derived. A man who has built several houses knows much more about it than the novice who is making his first trial. Yet guides are not supposed to do more than prompt, because if the entire work is theirs and not yours, then you are not advancing them, whatever the acclamations which the world may give you. I might mention one painter well known in your world, and often praised with the great name of genius; his pictures were indeed wonderful, but he painted them all under the direct influence of a guide who really worked for him. That artist had not an evolved soul or an unusual intelligence; he was a mere instrument, and when he came over to this side he had little to be credited to his favour, having rested content with what he was prompted to do, and never having sought to learn anything thoroughly for himself. With such a guide as his, he had vast opportunities for progress and genuine fulfilment, if he had only chosen to profit by them.

The materials for house-building surround you all; there are many patterns, and shops are waiting full of lumber and nails and tools; but you can understand that, while having to work, you need the help of an expert. So guides come by appointment according as they are specially fitted by experience to be useful. The darkness of your road is

lightened when your guide has been able to reach you clearly. The manifestation of the body will equal the manifestation of the spirit as you realise that you are spirit. Do not allow religious differences or social distinctions to separate you; the man of one religion or country is as good as you, if that man will insert deed instead of creed, and in place of dogma, harmony.

On one sphere I found two countries represented by two peoples, East and West. Neither understood the other, and their differences struck me as ridiculous and unnecessary. They were like children quarrelling over broken toys. Put away outer forms. If your Eastern brother likes a certain diet, let him have it, and he will respect your diet of the West. If a man bathes or does not bathe, if he has one form of life rather than another, it is unimportant. Do not carry your country with you wherever you go; you will not be able to bring over here your prejudices of caste, country, or race. So why not learn to be, while yet on earth, free like the winds of heaven, which can float in all directions?

You attach great importance to the etiquette of whatever country happens to be yours, and you think yourselves very clever for having invented or inherited it. Do you ignore, then, the fact that there is quite as much etiquette among animals? Monkeys have their code and their king. Birds follow a leader, and ants and bees have either a king or a queen. The lion is the recognised king of the jungle, not because of his size or fierceness, but because of his intelligence, which makes itself felt; he has powers which other animals lack. The serpent, though he crawls on the earth, is also a leader on account of his intelligence and his

powers of concentration, which he uses by fixing his eyes and subduing the creature before him. He rules largely through the power of fear: a curious thing, which causes more people and animals to lose their lives and opportunities than anything else. Confidence and assurance are required before success can come.

Psychology, the analysis of man, shows the mind to be a compound, and that compound must be held together by the force of will. But will is subject to desire, and so you must first wish to do the thing, and then will it with all your powers of concentration, while drawing up with your utmost ability the plan which seems best able to lead you to success. Each man is absolutely responsible for his every act; and the man who claims to be the victim of circumstances is a weakling bound to fall. The universe is thought; and what you see is but stage, scenery, and furnishings.

The agnostic will pronounce all this a delusion. But for some people, everything which cannot be confirmed by their very limited five senses is a delusion. The reason why science never gets beyond a certain point is because of the importance attached to the five physical senses, while the far more important sixth and seventh senses are ignored. We on this plane know of those higher senses; and, already on earth, your creators of art and music and literature enjoy the sixth sense, and many of you in dreams have the seventh.

The sixth sense is the Intuitive; it deals with the imagination, and plays a larger part in your present life than the first five senses which you recognise. The seventh is the Spiritual; it is a technical part of the sixth, and gives

a better understanding of it. It is because of your limitation to five physical senses that you live in the Third Dimension, and only a few so-called queer ones enjoy the Fourth Dimension, or faculty for seeing through an object, and not around or aside it. By getting the sixth and seventh senses clearly, you will think in the Fourth Dimension, and get in touch with souls.

All religion was founded on the sixth and seventh senses, not on the first five, which are elementary and bring no real understanding of things either intellectual or spiritual. Your memory stretches over all time, past and present, and your sixth and seventh senses give you glimpses of the future as you see that its possibilities are thoughts eternally preserved. In animals, the sense of scent, which warns them of danger, is closely allied to what is the sixth sense in man—the intellectual sense, allowing man to protect himself in moments of danger. Primitive man had this sixth sense far better developed than you; you have largely lost it through what you call civilisation, but you are getting it back again. The seventh sense, rarer in men, is nevertheless lying there latent within you, waiting for you to develop it; it is the sense which will lead you to communicate with Nature and with spirits on other planes, and even with God Himself in the fuller understanding.

You do not realise how much depends upon the thoughts and the atmospheres you create. Some centuries ago, whole countries were made subject to the will of a few; not so to-day—man is revolutionary by disposition, that is, thinking man is revolutionary, and the leaders among you go into action sometimes before other men

are ready for radical change. You can move some and force them to readiness, but this is difficult to do with the multitude, and for the excellent reason that your world represents so many different ages. Still, the greater your achievement along material lines, the more you hold in reserve, and you will reach only as far as you can think.

We talk with you each day, often without your knowing it consciously; our object is to explore your being while familiarising you gradually with the new language of thought. You do not always get our word; the light may come into your eyes and we may think you have understood, but when it passes after a moment, we are not discouraged. Your strange will may still stand between us, but it will consent to hear us, with time and patience. Where anything more material than thought-language is attempted, we must take on etheric matter momentarily, getting it from many elements in the room, when we would enter into communion with you. Thus, your chairs and tables are trees in another form; carpets represent either the lamb, or the cotton plant, or the silkworm. Everything is called upon to give over all it has. Thought demands this use for physical expression alone; it does not need etheric matter to reach you within your brain, and the latter form of communication is what I particularly commend to you in consequence. Hypnotism is dangerous. Your own spirit may be kept out for too long a time, and an evil-minded spirit may be tempted to enter in and take possession. This is rare, but it does happen. I think the majority of the so-called insane are disturbed by heartless spirits who obsess them. Prayers, colours, music, flowers, could cure two-thirds of the insane in your world if the

attributes were used intelligently with prayer, and with strong intelligence and a demand for normal conditions. Each soul has its aura surrounding it, and if that aura becomes clouded by a stronger colour, harmful conditions may result.

Your attributes come to you in the course of the evolution of your spirit, and are at the same time evidences of your continuity of lives and of your communion with the whole of Nature; as your spirit perfects itself through work and rises higher, you become identified with higher divisions in the other natural kingdoms.

The attributes of God are the attributes of man, and you have the power to become God-like in this ocean of love if you will let its waves wash you clean of all outside self and make you ready to have ever greater experiences. Mercy, love, understanding, and wealth will come to you if you are ready for them. By the grace of God you give, and by His grace you receive, and no man is fit to receive until he has learned to give. You can rise to divine love or sink to hell in your being, because both are conditions; or else you can starve in the midst of plenty. The exaggerated view you take of life is to blame for your troubles; you are looking outside for happiness, instead of at home. Men and women go round the world in search of happiness and health, when both are at their doorstep, if they will but see. Healers to-day can and do heal. How? By faith, by that harmony which they have learned to understand. Many have not what would be called a conscious understanding of that divine principle of life, but they respond to it in their obedience to the law of life, because of their faith in God. The soil should be re-

generated: new life, new hopes, new ambitions, that the flowers may bloom and the fruits ripen, and both will nourish and strengthen you and others. The number of your being is marked clearly and plainly, that all men with sight may see; your jewel of understanding shines in your eyes, that you may be led by its light, and learn to know that you are in the universe and the universe is in you.

There are people without attributes, but you have attributes if you amount to anything. You cannot separate man from other forms of life, and he gets into harmony with those forms as he advances. Therefore it is that man is related to the animal kingdom not only in his own person, but also in the semblance of some lower form of animal life; he is related to the vegetable kingdom by a fruit and by a flower, and some very highly evolved souls have trees; he is related to the mineral kingdom by a metal and by a precious stone.

Attributes as ignorantly understood by many may do more harm than good; they represent in themselves a long and complicated course of study, and one attribute may modify the precise significance of all the others in a person. Only those gifted with sight themselves, or communicating with spirits who have the sight, ought to attempt to tell other people of their attributes. All spirits have not this knowledge, so the utmost care should be exercised. For this reason, I shall not here go into details which might be misapplied though with the best intentions; I shall only mention briefly the principal attributes and give an idea of their significance.

You bring your number over with you from a previous existence; it represents the work accomplished. Whatever

number you have gained, remains yours; some acts might, however, cause another number to be added on, and you would have to work that other number off before benefiting once more by the one previously gained.

Your present world is influenced by the number Three. You have, first, the great Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Then you have the trinity of your body—head, trunk, foundation. In your heavens you find another trinity—sun, moon, and stars. Place yourself in the universe, consider yourself as body, soul, and spirit, and again you find the three: the body the outer vase, the soul the inner vase, and the spirit in the centre of your being. I said that you must place yourself in the universe for this, because the plane is not what matters, the work alone counts; when a change takes place, the outer vase must be ready, the principle being the same whether that outer vase or body is ethereal or physical. The ancients understood this idea of the vase when they put clay on the outside of the dead body while the soul was building or rebuilding its ethereal house. And do not think that your religion alone recognises the Trinity. The Hindus have it in Brahma, Vishnu, Siva; the Romans, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Scandinavians, and many others had it also in their religion.

Three is the number of genius, art in one great sense made clear to a man, but only in one sense; the Three, in spite of his marvellous gifts, might be completely lacking in principle, might even be a scoundrel, or else he might overrate his one gift so as to think that he knows all other things as well, whereas he does not.

Seven is also an important number in your world; it

is the great psychic number; you have recognised it in the seven seals, in the seven days; the children of Israel had it in the seven-branched candlesticks. Many prophets are sevens; but since it means a great unfolding of gifts, it may stand for any form of art.

Six and Nine both mean knowledge, they represent the serpent, the Six with the head turned down—earthly knowledge; Nine with the head turned up—higher knowledge; the scientist is often a nine, the artist, rarely.

Eleven means a fine comprehension of art, either in its conception or in its reception; it also stands for rhythmic understanding; it may tend towards sound rather than colour, and would include higher mathematics.

Thirteen is, with Nine, the intellectual number. It is feared very unreasonably by superstitious people as having had its influence on Christ. If you think of Christ as a part of that group, yes; but if you realise Christ as the Word given in flesh, He is not part of any group, being One or all. So the number you mean is not thirteen, but twelve. You really have thirteen months in your year, if you would only learn to divide your time rightly.

There is only one Number One, Christ Himself.

The Two represents God the Father and the Universe, the Holy Ghost or Host.

The numbers are specially influenced by the colours, and the colours by the numbers.

Your colour, or aura, you also bring into your world in your new physical life, like your number, if you are highly enough developed to have earned a colour by work. It comes in all forms of life, and represents spirituality. Some-

times the aura is not very clear, or there are spots in it; then the comprehension of that soul is not very good. Blue means freedom from the physical, great spirituality, perhaps cold and unemotional, but true. Pink, the emotional colour, is warm, and capable of strong affections. Yellow, the reflection of the sun, means sound and a high appreciation of art. The highest colour is cream, the Christ-colour. Green is the foundation colour, and stands for intellect, wisdom, understanding. Red, the colour of blood, is passionate and intense. Purple does not count as a colour amongst us, as it has so many other colours in it, even to black; yet it does exist among you, as a bad colour, people who have no growth or development. Brown shows a very earthly quality, without spiritual development. Orange is higher than either purple or brown, having yellow in it, yet it is earthly. Either pink, violet, or blue shows that the person can only be unfolded by sorrow. To attain the high cream-colour, all other colours must be passed through.

One attribute is so closely connected with another that it may modify all the others. You may, for instance, be a Blue in this life, and yet not follow the same course as another Blue, if all your other attributes are different; your blue might then remain over from another life, in which you had realised its importance either more completely or less completely than now.

Precious stones mean understanding: the pearl is very high, though vegetable rather than mineral. It has all the colours, and is itself cream. Then come the ruby and the emerald, warmer than the diamond, but less clear. Other stones have their values. Metals mean

character: creto is a mineral which exists on your earth, but you have not yet discovered it.

Fruits and flowers mean aspiration and inspiration. Among flowers, the white rose means serenity, a person who has passed through very painful experiences. A pink rose is warm, and shows affection and inspiration. The white lily is very high: it has greater perfume than the rose because it has the refinement of suffering.

Christ is frequently referred to in His attribute, the lamb for innocence; St. John the Baptist also saw a dove alight on Jesus, attesting purity and divine quality. We know that the four Evangelists had their animal attributes; so have we, when we have earned them. The serpent is very high, representing wisdom.

Very few men deserve the attribute of a tree; St. John the Baptist is among the few. The pine and the live oak stand alike as attributes. As these attributes are part of us, so we are part of them, and they are benefited by our working in harmony with them.

By knowing your attributes and surrounding yourself with them, you can most perfectly establish with us the communion of spirit. But they will also serve to show you that you are an integral part of life.

There is no liberty from people or from other forms of life, as it is our general inter-relationship which puts us into harmony and makes us one with God. "Freedom through discovery" is, I believe, a name for some fantastic new thought. Freedom from what? From others or from yourselves? If you are trying to break from the house of bondage, I can understand that you should wish to throw open the doors which have kept you prisoners within your

own hearts and have shut out the light. But be sure that by your "Freedom through discovery" you discover yourselves, and not only the faults of others. Know yourself, and the world is yours, for you are the universe. Throughout all ages man has been seeking God, because God is within him. You go forth, return, complete your circle, and find the God in yourself. Though sin does not exist, you may have many imperfect ways of doing things, and in the ignorance and superstition you draw about you, you keep your true self from the manifestation of God.

Therefore work and pray, but do not pray without work. Intuitive consciousness tells a man when he is right, if he would but listen. Moses saw and recognized Jehovah in the burning bush; he knew it was not a delusion, for he was a sane man. Many in those times had vision, and they did not question it, for they understood its meaning. The whole of the Bible is based on the Communion of Spirits, and their advice was good advice. Men who received counsel in the name of God were held to be good men: and they were good men.

Aaron and the other Hebrew priests of his time understood the Urim and Thummim, a curious instrument of clay, which gave them power to get into communication with the unseen forces about them; thus, those who did have within themselves the power to communicate direct with God were helped by this physical connection. The prophet Isaiah had visions and talked with God. Abraham entertained three angels, and they talked with him about Sarah his wife, and told him of the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah —showing that they were not in ignorance of the sins of the flesh, and that they sought to help the children of the world

to reclaim themselves. Daniel had communion with God: he read the writing on the wall, which none but he could interpret; he also had a vision of the four beasts, the attributes of the four Evangelists; he had many visions, some of which he could not understand without the aid of Gabriel.

So we to-day need help with many of our visions. It is because each of us can get only a part, and by uniting you shall have a clearer understanding. You need no Urim or Thummim to-day, but only a few living attributes of life, fruits, flowers, and light. By light I do not mean lamps or electricity: I mean normal conditions of air and daylight. We do not need darkness. That has been employed often as a means to mystify, or sometimes to aid those who are not honest in giving a message. Truth need not be covered: we have light and sun in our world also, your conditions are our conditions in this respect, and therefore we need demand no change.

Our ancient brothers told many curious truths about the conditions of spirit life. Persons of all ages have had communion with the unseen and real forces of Nature, and messages have been given to the world in various ways. All have gifts of the spirit, but this gift of the spirit differs, according to St. Paul; some seeing and others hearing, and some understanding so clearly that they prophesy. Paul would not have had you ignorant of what occurred in his day, or in the days of Elias and Moses and the Church Fathers. They had messages conveyed to them by God and the Ministering Angels. The ancients believed that spirit existence went on, and that God walked and talked with them, often coming in the flesh-form and living

among them. They were right, because people from every sphere and from every period come to the earth and take on the garb of flesh. You often have men of ancient times with you, and do not realise it. Still, you wonder why some of you can do remarkable things and others have no such power. I answer that those things are done by people who have acquired experience elsewhere, and who have come to the earth to give a message, just as we go into the ethereal garb to gain more light.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

THIRTEENTH LETTER

Conditions of etheric life—Heaven and hell are conditions, but exist in some spheres rather than in others—Spirits of men, animals, and flowers on other planes—The strange frames of mind among certain people who pass over—Some cases observed by Dr. Coulter—The ironworks, abode of those who stubbornly refuse to recognise their faults—Souls may remain ignorant for a time of their changed condition.

BEAUTY goes hand in hand with noble deeds; spirits who live in the great fulness of their being are beautiful, and all their attributes are beautiful because all that does harm has been removed. Misshapen, decrepit, ugly beings do not exist in spirit; there are no blind, no lame, no hideous things of any kind; everything lives in a state of perfection.

Yet we have many conditions. A man is placed according to his merits: if he has lived a clean, honest, upright life, doing good where he could and harming none, his condition is a happy one, he is met on this side by friends and workers who come to him with that wonderful love free from selfish desires, and his heaven is assured, for heaven is a condition, not a place. Yet heaven exists in certain spheres of life and not in others. What is meant by this is, that you must be in a position to see. If you are starving, your judgment will not be the same as when your body has been properly nourished. As this is true of physical planes, so a similar law applies to the spiritual.

There is no hell as you sometimes picture it on earth. But we have planets peopled by men and women who have been fiends in their physical lives. There, people may have to live, shut off from light and love until, by centuries of hard work, their spirits have lived out each human injustice which they committed.

Heaven is only for those who are ready for it, and a hell of conscience awaits those who refused to think on earth. If your life has been cramped and selfish, you will be placed in that position which you have deserved; if, on the other hand, you have been a victim of others, you will be credited with your right efforts, though robbed of their fruits of earth. The spirit-mind works with the swiftest vibrations, and all your unkind deeds pass before you in a flash. No one need explain: you must be truthful with yourself as with others, you see your errors and you know that each must be erased; though, if the errors are not very grave, you will have the privilege of choosing your own time and place and manner. There is no hell except the one you make for yourself, but you can make it pretty hot if you pile on too much fuel. You have the power—if you would exercise it—to make your heaven the wonderful abode of peace which our Father holds out to you and me, and all the children of all the worlds, if we love.

If I were to tell you that our streets are of gold, and all such nonsense, you would easily understand the conditions of our life. But our streets are not of gold, nor of asphalt, nor even of crushed stone. They are soft plots where grass and trees grow in natural form, undistorted by the caprice of man. With us, lakes, rivers, mountains,

plains, are as Nature meant them to be; just as men and women dare to be themselves, to talk freely, to show their friendship for one another. Thus lives are not idle, nor are they wrecked.

One of the first things I noticed on coming over here was the number of little groups of spirits gathered on every hand. I went up to one. The people were holding a very earnest conversation, and trying to decide a point; some were very much in favour of it; others, not. I listened, and discovered that it was a vast scheme for the benefit of their brother-man. That is all which really concerns us. The sorrows of the world, or of the worlds, do not impress us to any great extent; we only watch the results with interest, so as to know how you will take it. When I say "we," I mean, of course, the multitude who have reached understanding. Many pass out of your life having no real hold anywhere; as there are millions of people in your world with no other thought than to exist, who let the great things of life slip by them, so there are millions of spirits restless and without object before them.

I notice that the earth-friends who talk with me generally want to know, first, something about our mode of life; they say that most spirits whom they have consulted have evaded answers as to what you call the future life, alleging often that you could not understand, or that you were not meant to know. This is nonsense; you were meant to know, and you can perfectly understand if you free your minds from prejudice, look beyond the material, and see things as they are. The truth of the matter is that many spirits, earth-bound, lack experience, and do not know much more about the conditions of spiritual life than you

do, and for the same reason which holds you back, *i.e.*, that they do not want to know. And they are very human when, instead of acknowledging the limitations of their ignorance, they try to bluff you by playing at superior wisdom and impenetrable mystery. It is a case, not of mystery, but of mist.

We do not live in houses, they are only for poor souls that have not evolved. We love our world, with its refreshing breath of life; we enjoy the vision of suns whose light cannot dazzle and whose heat cannot burn us. We feel, but with refined senses which need not suffer unless we will them to; we see great distances, and can will our sight to become keener and to carry farther; and we talk, using terms as you do, but not needing sounds to make them intelligible.

We have in the spirit many spheres which are as your planes on earth; some are very thickly inhabited, others less so; spirits cluster together, especially near places where there are opportunities to learn. With regard to our branches of study, many just now are working at chemistry, because that science is of great use to man.

We are taught that everything in life has its utility, and that it fits as a part into the whole; but this fuller knowledge comes only in a soul-spiritual existence. The smallest creeping or flying thing in Nature has laws of its own, and the individuals of each species vary in stature, complexion, and characteristics. With our increased sight we can distinguish one ant from another, and with our refined hearing we can listen to what they are saying.

Trees are great talkers and great observers too, and many interesting things they have to tell.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

Water has been the most fascinating of my minor studies. I well remember my amusement when, standing by a stream, I heard a conversation, and, turning round, found it was the water. A tributary flowed in at this point, and the main river told it to go on and hold together, leaving the course undisturbed.

Soon after coming over, I asked to see various animals, and was taken to their kingdom by friends. I saw animals whose existence I had never suspected: monsters so large that they were past belief even as they rose before me; and others, infinitely small. My friends told me that I must think hard to get more sight, before I could observe the latter. I did so, and was able to study every detail of their being, and to note that they were perfect in form and wonderfully made.

I then wished to see fishes, and was taken to vast waters; my eyes penetrated to the very depths, and saw many forms and marvellous colourings of aquatic life, and heard the fish talk; they showed an intelligence which amazed me.

Thinking of birds and flowers, I was led by my friends towards birds whose song and plumage surpassed in beauty anything I could have imagined; it was these birds who gave me my first lessons in Harmony. As for the flowers, their perfume will live for ever with me. Those with less colour and perfume were striving to attain more, but all so happily. I had many conversations with my flower-friends. The white rose, for which I had always had a special liking, told me that loving thoughts expressed for it on earth were a help to it, and said: "One of the surest signs of development in man is the love of flowers." I was then told that

for some special reason the physical suffering of flowers was very severe. One lily, white and pure, with a touch of yellow in its centre, told me that it had endured much sorrow.

Flowers have a life of their own, independent of the tree or stalk, even after being cut. They do not mind being cut, when they are to be put near men and women, and are to be loved and admired during the hours their perfume and colour may last. But care should be taken of them, as they are among the living things on your plane. When they are bound too tightly in bunches, they suffer. There is a particularly vicious habit you have in some parts of your earth-plane—plunging the stems into boiling water to make the buds open out. If you could hear, as I do, the screams of torture of the poor victims, you would never do this again.

I found trees, vines, and vegetables in the utmost profusion. All the varieties I had ever seen on earth, and millions more I had never suspected, were there, all working and happy. The apples were perfect in form and wonderful in colouring. One said to me: "We grow better here, because other life is not so dependent upon us; the worm does not strike at our heart and interfere with our development, as on earth, so our whole strength can go to colour and perfume."

While he was speaking, I ate several apples, and found them delicious. You may wonder if this did not do them more harm than the gnawing of worms. But you see, in this world, we do not understand eating quite as you do. The perfume of fruits and flowers suffices to nourish us, and to cause us far greater pleasure than you can get, eating as

you do. Another point which might possibly puzzle you would be in regard to the proportions in which you may think fruit and flowers multiply, if never decreased in numbers by being destroyed. They do not increase beyond measure any more than souls do; they are sent out with a work to do, and they may evolve on different planes, but the spirit of each remains one in various manifestations. Remember that in men's spirits, one spirit may live hundreds or thousands of years, while being the same spirit, in the course of its evolution. The individual life of a flower or a stone cannot be compared to the life of man; yet it is no less real, and occupies in the scheme of all things a place which belongs to it by a right just as complete.

I still frequently visit my flower and fruit friends, which are not limited to any one sphere, but are distributed, like the rest of Nature, throughout all spheres.

No man on any sphere can be happy in doing wrong, because he is going against the powers that be, and bringing discord to himself and others. For almost all men there is much that needs eradication. You must strip yourself of all show, false ideas, self-importance, and come into the light of reason, as man is revealed before himself. If he has created a heaven by merit, that heaven is his to enjoy; or a hell, then the remorse and agony of that hell come in the recollection of misdeeds. Only by undoing those misdeeds, and learning God's message of love and harmony, can real progress begin. God is not an angry God, He is a loving Father; but we must obey the laws of life. If we draw to ourselves untruths or evil deeds directed against others or ourselves, they must be undone. All pain and degradation that we have caused must be

erased before we can go on. These currents mean that you are out of Harmony. As you cross the spheres of life to greater life you lose the passionate desire to do wrong, and are anxious to replace and undo whatever may interfere with your growth. Progress is rapid for those who desire it and are ready. The Continuity of Lives is not meant for suffering, it is meant for growth. Some need to suffer in order to grow. The spirit, when freed from the flesh or physical house, generally goes out on the breath, through the mouth; but there are those so advanced that the spirit gets its freedom on the ingoing breath, that is, is released straight from the heart, where the spirit resides while in the flesh-house, and does not have to pass through the head for what you call the death-agony. Your bodies are beautiful still, you feel them; they are pleasant cares in health, but, when disease assails you, they become great bores, and they usually become so just at death. But death gives lightness to your body, if you have really lived and not been content with existing, and if you have God in your heart. Then this great illumination that death unfolds, its wonderful revelation, its many open doors, the beauty and power of one's real living being, will come to you. So, realising what you have really done or really left undone, you have a very real heaven or a very real hell.

All this should go to prove—if proof were required—that there are no dead over here, that we are all very much alive. The real dead are in your world, and they do not lie in their graves, either; they are walking the streets and pretending to be alive, although they have not learned how to think. You could drum into their ears as

much as you pleased, without being able to make them hear; and it is they who, when they want to communicate with the spirit, not only do themselves no good, but do harm to others by the way they repeat messages. No harm can be done by a real spirit; harm can only be done by the colour in which you receive the communication.

Some will carelessly ask a great teacher or worker, who has all but sacrificed his life to advance his thought, to enter into a scheme to further their own desires, and will bring discredit upon the worker; but they will not care so long as their request is granted; they will use, absorb, crush, without compunction. You can accomplish nothing by arguing a point with them, and they will only add insult if you protest. Teachers and workers have been ruined many times to satisfy just such people, and the only sympathy they get when they protest is to be told that they have become independent and hopeless. All workers of real value have felt the evil sting of contact with such people, who want no teacher and no religion that cannot be used selfishly.

It is a regrettable fact that this type of person often holds the most money or power, and will use either to trample down men or women of great worth. Few of the great have received their true reward on earth, and, what is worse, their ideas have often been stolen or added to. The works of Homer and Shakespeare have been tampered with, so that all parts of those works, as you now know them, were not written by the great geniuses who were their authors; yet both men lived, and the thought of the works which is the important thing, is theirs.

Your earth-world is making rapid advance, but you

have proclaimed Money its king. When man has satisfied his material needs, if he does not seek knowledge he will at once seek amusement; he will seek more exclusive circles to float about in; and then, like a real king, will want a few people to play fools for him; poets, musicians, painters, or scientists. Thus, gifted men become dependent principally upon whole-souled, free-hearted, but loose individuals; perhaps not bad as a class, but fond of debauch and every carnal enjoyment, who seek those best able to help them to enjoy life; and when the gifted artist falls a victim to temptation, it is on him alone that your blame falls. Other artists, less "favoured," must endure all conceivable trials and hardships, without finding any support worth the mention. Many a one who breathed his mission, his God, his life, into his work, now looks down upon your world to see his masterpieces sold for fortunes; he may smile sadly, and say, "My brothers would hardly allow me to live so long as I was among them! I might have done better in a properly lighted room, with enough food and a fire to keep me warm." The artist class should have the help and friendship of every thinking man and woman; art does not belong to any one people or to any one age.

We are much as the worlds are. Just as, without fire and water, they lose their spirit and life, so it is the fire in man which, with the water, helps to make man. Those without the divine spark of inspiration are without flavour. Cool, calculating people are like some earths, dried and useless: they have no joy in living, they see all men and all things on one dull plane, in one dim light. Relief is necessary for the picture of life; do not fear rainy days to

balance those of sunshine; do not avoid suffering with those who suffer about you, any more than laughing with those who laugh. The unemotional man does not live, he is not all there, as the capacity for feeling in man is the gauge of his ability.

You are wont to reproach artists with not being like other people. If they were like the great mass of unmoved furniture you generally see about you in human guise, they would never produce great books or pictures or statues. Thinkers and creators are living every moment, are every swaying in one direction or in another; they are not loving life, they are having life. The poet, the musician see what God wants all of you to see—the glory of the life in the midst of which you stand, and the wonderful truths revealed on every side.

But, instead, there are dead-alive creatures ever snapping the cords of life in their divine brothers; there are Pharisees and Sadducees, reducers of men's ideals, of man's divine inspiration.

I hope that if any who read what I write have rendered hard the lives of any one else, they will make an effort to restore right conditions. The world's progress is a man-to-man battle. This Harmony, which is based on good and simple lives, is dependent upon all. So the dead-alive must be made to understand. We of the living spheres of life come and see these dead people smiling their ghastly smiles, saying they are happy, and yet doing evil. Remember that you will never find any other devils than those you create by evil desire and thought, or any other hell; and no heaven except what you create by fellowship and real love.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

A young man passed over into our world; he had been a student, a clever man, but was stricken down by consumption, and the disease was contracted by his young wife, who lay on the bed beside him. During the long months of his painless death he had time to think of all he would have liked to have done. He had no real religion, for he was disgusted with the narrow and cruel creed of his father, who taught an eye for an eye, and talked of hell fire or a heaven of golden streets. The young man himself was something of a thinker; Darwin's theory of evolution pleased him, and Herbert Spencer's philosophy helped him mentally, but he was spiritually starved.

He passed out; but was drawn back, by love for his wife, to the room where his body lay. He saw his earth-family, and heard himself spoken of: vaunted for virtues he had not known he possessed, and varnished over where he knew he had faults. The day of the funeral came: he followed the body to the church.

"The preacher," he has told me, "was as narrow as my father, religiously; he said my death was a terrible thing, and that, while my family mourned my loss, they should mourn most of all my unbelief. He had all sorts of harsh things to say of me—in the presence of my earth-body, of which he knew, and of my spirit, which he could not see—all because I had not embraced his particular kind of religion. If I had had regrets for having broken away from his church, they would have been destroyed after this. I thanked God, my real God, whom I knew to be intelligent, for having given me reason to think out conditions for myself.

"That God, of whom I had only a faint glimmering

then, has become a reality to me; He is in my soul, where I see Him and talk with Him; and my wife, who has since joined me, talks with Him in her soul. We find about us heavenly thought, with the divine right of being. Other spirits come to us; we hold meetings, and go over the past, present, and future of our life; souls talk to us, and we have no fear of separation, since love lives, and cannot be separated by millions of miles. I have seen in person my beloved friend, Herbert Spencer, who said to me, at our first meeting, 'I was right, but I did not go far enough.' Darwin, Huxley, and many others whom I loved, I have now grown to know; the wonderful Shakespeare, who meant so much to me in my early development, and Robert and Elizabeth Browning, and numerous others.

"All Nature here seems to say, 'I love you and want your love.' If I were to go back to earth, I should even try to love that little two-by-four preacher who put all people into either heaven or hell to suit his fancy. He is one of a species. There are fewer of them than there used to be. Hell is going out of fashion. Men's ideas of religion change as surely as their ideas of clothes, because either would pinch if cut out of shape for the times. The one cut of religion that never jars or injures is based on the life that is simple, earnest, honest, useful, fair, and affectionate, helping brother-man and praying to God. You do not need any third party to pray for you; and mere words are useless, they do not reach the ceiling. Prayer must commence in the heart, to go from soul to soul.

"My wife and I are waiting together to see the effect of this eye-opener upon our narrow-minded little preacher

friend when he comes over, and whether he will be disappointed not to find the sort of heaven and hell he expected. It is too bad that a man, having ordinary intelligence and the consequent capacity to think, should be such an ass. But every age has produced the like in one form or another."

The trouble with many who come over here is that they are tired of life; they think only of their cares and trials, their illness and death—they fear the life beyond, and yet wish for it. They think that death should change them all, should make them unnatural; that God and the angels must be unnatural beings in white clouds of mystery. Their brains are, indeed, filled with unhealthy and unholy pictures based on superstition; and when they find natural conditions, with all their actions and thoughts recorded on imperishable cylinders which may be unrolled before them at any moment, they are both surprised and displeased.

A man once came over here who had been deacon of a church for twenty-five years. He was a rich man, and a good man in his own opinion and in that of most people. He had certainly been to the fore with charities and church works, giving his money very freely, but always asking for his name to be identified with everything he did.

He died, and was considerably surprised to find himself all alone. He supposed he must be in heaven, for that was the proper place for him to be; indeed, he knew he belonged there, never having done any active harm to any one. But he did not very much like the isolation of the place in which he found himself, so he started out to look for something better.

He met a man, and asked the way to heaven, explaining that he had a right to be there. The man said, "If that were the case, you would be there already, for this would seem heaven to you. Are you quite sure that your life was as much of a success as you seem to consider it?"

The deacon felt hurt, but showed no resentment; he knew that the righteous were frequently misunderstood. But he decided to test the possibility of making the present place seem heaven to him. "If you bring a harp for me to play on," he said, "I shall know that this is heaven."

The man brought a harp, and the deacon was surprised to find that he could not play. He could not even tune it. "Perhaps you never learned to play the harp," said the man. "Is there anything else you wanted in heaven which I can help you to find?"

The deacon, bitterly disappointed over his failure to play the harp, said that he had looked forward to one other thing when he should reach heaven, and that was to paint glorious pictures like the masters of old. His new friend accordingly brought him paints and brushes; and the deacon found he could not paint either, because he had never learned how.

He then began to realise that heaven must mean work, since idleness can bring only discontent and unhappiness on any plane; and that there is little difference between heaven and earth, since in either condition one can know nothing which has not been learned.

We have one condition, however—a sphere that is dark, clammy, cold, filled with men and women of iron disposition who are determined that they will go their own way. We call it the ironworks. These people are not confined

there, except by the hardness of their thoughts and the spirit of revenge that obsesses them. This they must overcome, as they are not allowed to bring this type of thought into the lives of others. And if, after many lessons, they still hold to their wickedness of desire, they must stay where they can do no harm. Each of those people is so convinced of the rightness of his thought that he might corrupt others. All sinners think that the other man is a greater sinner, just as saints are ready to believe that another man is the greater saint. Men in the ironworks will offer to substantiate their statements: their vision is blinded. But they will get out of it, since no one is lost. These people are visited daily by souls from higher spheres, who point out the way and try to make them see. Some people need hell; their whole thoughts have been spent in hell, and its lowest depths must be reached before they see. The rocks are very steep for some, and the depths very low for others.

The ironworks are not filled simply with murderers, thieves, and rapers. Some of the world's greatest men and women are there, being as weak in one quality as they are strong in another. Honour gained on earth is useless unless it is honour gained in heaven. You must have faith, charity, and rhythmic harmony.

Turmoil is in man's soul when he does evil, and the deed only expresses the thought. Many evil thoughts do evil without expression, but they always strike back at the sender. The ironworks hell has many spheres: in the lowest depths you will find men who have gone pretty far down; others, who are beginning to learn, have a little light. These conditions are hells made by man himself,

but none is so dreadful as that created by man in dungeons and prison-tortures on the earth-plane and the battlefield. People in the ironworks have overcome physical desire; they are held simply by their will to see that their wrong deeds were justified—there are no other chains for them. One man, who had killed eight men, told me that every murder was right, that those people whom he had killed had deserved to die. Another man, who had caused great suffering and thousands of deaths to satisfy his own ambition, insisted also that his every action had been justified. This iron will must be bent. Many on earth to-day will find lodgment there, I fear.

The contrast with this is the spirit life of men who, while having sinned on the earth-plane, recognise their fault and try to atone for it by every conceivable means.

A man I know and love very much, who had been in the spirit life nearly two thousand years, has told me of his great suffering. Power had been thrust upon him when he was quite a young lad; he had been filled with pride, and had become cruel to the point of inhumanity. He not only had people tortured for his pleasure, but he let a great city burn without making an effort to quench the flames; so that untold horrors resulted, even to the wrongful accusation of numbers of people. Now, this man had come to earth, and had been given vast power for good; but vanity and ill-directed strength had proved his undoing. He has since paid his price for service.

Chains, dungeons, tortures, are left to you on the earth-plane; on the spirit-plane, iron wills are broken by reason. The ironworks mean that men must learn to see themselves clearly.

There is another phase of this same condition; it is for those people who have never done anything and who see nothing to do. They think that life was meant to give them things, and that they have no obligations; they think that they serve by merely living, that God Himself must be proud of their existence; they think that they need not do anything they do not want to, and they do not—why should they? Even what they happen to do accidentally cannot count for them, as a thing done without thought is not done. Sooner or later these people, like the others, must realise their mistakes.

A strange class of people come over here, expecting all their relations to meet them, and all as they were on earth, with children still as children. Such spirits are surprised, mystified, and often really hurt when they do not find these conditions awaiting them.

A certain woman waited at one of the passages of heaven for a hundred years. She wanted her husband, who very shortly after dying had had to go back and live again on earth. She had survived him, and not finding him when she got into the other world, she decided to wait. She was the mother of his children, and had been a faithful wife; she had refused to re-marry during the forty years her life had continued on earth, because she had expected him to stand waiting for her on the other side. But, instead of this, he had gone on; he was progressing. She was one of those who thought the world owed her consideration because she had suffered a loss. It is a mistake which many of you make, to imagine losses as permanent; whereas God may be trusted to know when spirits ought to be called over.

A friend asked the soul for whom she was waiting.

She said, "My husband; I shall wait here all eternity, if necessary, until he realises his duty."

She had not lost her age, since age is thought; in fact, she grew older and older, tiring herself in stupid, selfish desire—fretting, worrying, grumbling, as she stood at the fount of truth and refused to realise it.

When her husband finally came over, he did not know the old and ugly woman who came to claim him. He knew her only when realisation came to her, when she stopped trying to teach duty to others and began to think of her own duty; for then her age fell away from her.

You must all learn that there is no ownership of souls, that all are free and can be tied only by their own cords, though these may be rather tight at times.

One man had buried, seemingly, three wives, who had all loved him and all of whom he had loved for what they gave him. He died, and found only one waiting for him, and she was the one he had cared for least of all. He asked her where the others were. She said, "I don't know. I did not find them, and did not seek them. I am your first and only wife. I waited because it was my duty alone."

The earth-death had freed him from many limitations, and that word "duty" had a curious, hollow sound, with a ring of defiance in it. He said, "But did you not want to wait?" She answered, "Oh, yes. Of course I might have gone on, if I had wanted to. You kept me back."

He was thinking, and her words suggested deep thoughts. His mind cleared. He said, "My dear, if you have waited in mere duty, then you have waited in vain. Come with me, if you breathe love in every fibre of

your being; but if, as you suggest, you feel only duty, then I refuse to drag a lodestone around with me. We must work apart until we are prepared to work together. I have not been here long, but millions of years past and present seem to roll before my vision. I see myself, I see you. I see that you have not loved your real husband. I need growth, and so do you, but it is others we need to help us, and not each other. I have no other sentiment for you than love; but I need in my life a love more real than this."

She could not understand, and that lack of understanding caused them to part. Had they really loved, they could not have parted.

In contrast with these cases was that of a child who died, loving her parents very much. A nurse taught her and helped her to grow on this side; while her parents, on the other side, followed her spirit in thought, saying to themselves at each birthday, "She is now so old," and helping and loving other children for her sake. Her clothes, her toys were given away where they could bring happiness; only one tiny slipper was kept, not as an object to stir grief, but as a link with the soul they felt to be still near them—as it indeed was. No separation ever existed there; and when the time of the parents came to go beyond, they found their child, grown into a beautiful woman, waiting, with radiant face, ready to help them with the knowledge she had gained, and held to them by the love which had never wavered.

What you call grief is often a very different emotion.

I knew of a father and mother who would take no thought but of grief when their little boy died; the father

took to drink, neglecting his wife and daughter, and brought them from prosperity to the verge of ruin. This was not grief, as they thought, but selfish resentment on the man's part that what he judged his rights should be interfered with by God. Dwelling upon his son as his flesh and blood, he forgot the most important part, the spirit. The flesh is but dross; the spirit is the light, the expression. This man cared little for the living; he would drag his daughter about with him to saloons, exposing her to insult, while he was busy drowning his so-called grief in strong drink. He never stopped to reflect that he owed care to those who were still with him in the flesh; that the spirit-hold may be brief, here to-day and there to-morrow, and may be released like the blowing out of a candle. The little girl, weary and disheartened, exhausted by the life she had led, fell ill and died too. Who was to blame? The poor mother prayed constantly that her children's father might at least be spared to her. Finally reason came to his dulled senses, and he cast off the weakness which had blinded him like a veil. All four are now in the spirit, and are face to face, living and loving.

Sometimes spirits are unable to realise conditions when they arrive here, because the narrowness of their thought stands between them and truth; but sometimes they are allowed to remain ignorant of the fact that they have died, because their hold is weak, and they need time to prepare themselves.

A very promising and beautiful boy, a great soul who had taken flesh, came over here as the result of an accident while playing. He had passed a rope round his neck,

the noose slipped, and he was hanged, calling for help, but vainly; two people heard those desperate calls, but from afar, and none arrived to save him from death.

He had gone through a strange experience not long before. A man whom he had known and liked had died; the boy went to the funeral, and was much impressed by the sight of that body, in its overpowering silence, within the closed room.

Well, as the boy himself came over to our side, this man met him, and said, "Hallo, Jack, how are you? I haven't seen you for several weeks. Have you seen So-and-so?" Jack answered, "No!" and then, looking at the man again, said, "But you are dead; I went to your funeral, and looked on your face. Am I dead, too? Oh, yes—I remember! The rope slipped——" But the man broke in, saying, with a laugh, "What nonsense! I am not dead. I never felt better; and it is delightful, because I have not been well, you know. The only thing I can't understand is why they brought me here. I didn't know I wanted a change. I have many friends elsewhere, but here there are only strangers. But I will not let myself think about it; I have had a good deal of business strain, and I think I may be nervous." "Oh, but you are dead —really dead!" said Jack, who understood. "I saw you buried, I heard the earth drop on your coffin. I dropped a leaf into your grave, and kissed it first." The man looked dazed, but shook his head, repeating, "No, I am not dead, I am not dead."

Just then a man and a woman came up, friends of the boy, who had also died; they embraced him, and told him he was really alive now, and should be glad all was

over. The boy cried, saying, "Shall I never see any of my people again?" The woman reassured him, telling him he might see them as often as he wished. The man had stood by, listening, and suddenly recognised in the woman his own mother. He knew there could be no mistake now, for he had seen her buried. She told him that they had left him time to find himself, as his spirit needed strengthening. Then he laughed for joy, with regret for those he had left, and remorse that he had not settled his business properly for their sakes, but glad that he was alive and awake to the reality of life.

In all our spheres of spiritual life we are advancing; there is no struggle save for the power to conquer self; our general preoccupation is to help make brother-man happy, and do away with the thing which causes all unhappiness—selfishness. But before you can realise the needs of others you must be able to see them; and you do not see them so long as you fail to see yourself.

Heaven is not an almost unattainable goal, it is your normal condition. Hell is the abnormal condition. Get into touch with God and with the universe, and all forms of Hell, from your prisons to our ironworks, from your human hogs to your idle, worrying spirits, will alike disappear. As Harmony will change the face of many nations, and will make war and strife impossible, we are praying for peace. God grant that it will come soon.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

FOURTEENTH LETTER

The varieties of life in the universe—The planets as spirits can see them—The sun is not what you believe it to be—Life on Mars, Juno, Mercury, Venus, Jupiter—The earth as spirits know it to be—Some prophecies of Dr. Coulter's—Letter from a recent arrival.

WHILE you speculate upon the life of the Spirit, and often would cast discredit on what we of the Spirit have to say of it, you do not half know even the physical world in which you live. If you could go through space with us, many of your ideas of life would be altered, though perhaps you would not dare reveal all that you saw. But since you cannot yet do this, I shall tell you of some of my observations on Rhea and other planets.

In all the millions of worlds known to us the varieties of life fill us with admiration, and cause amazement as to the way in which certain of these forms evolved. No doubt we were in such forms once; all forms are necessary for a full expression of one's real self.

Some of your earth-astronomers are already advanced enough to know that the other planets of your solar system are inhabited. To state that life is possible on only one physical plane is as foolish as to state that only one life is possible. The people who commit themselves to the latter statement are living three lives, while saying they have but one: the three-part life of man—body, soul, and spirit.

Your men who call themselves astronomers should

come from a class schooled in the various principles of life. Where one merely looks at stars and guesses at their distance, not even the discovery of a condition is made, for a little later always comes the second discovery that the first was wrong. Your attempts at measuring distance are vain, and we smile to see you deceiving yourselves into the belief that space and time can be measured by the going down of your sun. All life is changing its position hourly. That very physical body of yours will not be the same to-morrow, any more than the waves of the mighty ocean will be the same. The basin or outline may remain, but the thing itself will not.

It is a pity that your field of investigations should be limited by your preconceived notions of life. Science should be careful before committing itself to great statements which will be disproved, and will expose it to ridicule. Men, whose earth-life has been spent in the study of the planets have had to alter their views when facts have presented themselves; they have then continued their investigations with a clear range. Your belief that other planets are not inhabited is all wrong. Your protoplasm theory is right, but you have not carried it far enough. We can go farther than you, because space does not interfere with our researches.

I well understand that from what you can see of various planets you should consider them uninhabited. Spectrum analysis and fallen meteoric rock have, indeed, allowed your earth-scientists to discover such elements as oxygen and magnesium; but you have not been able to analyse the dead substance-matter of that which caused life. You are already in a position to know, if you would, that all the

essential conditions of life—heat, light, water, etherised density, abundant oxygen, and carbonic and other gases required to sustain as well as to produce life—exist on planets near to you. If the men of your world fail to observe this, and so continue to deny the possibility of life for others than themselves, more's the pity for them. But they will learn, whether they wish to or not, when the veil is torn from their eyes, and they become in reality a part of all space and a time of all time.

Not all planets are inhabited at the present moment. A planet may be inhabited to-day, and to-morrow not be required; planets only serve man as places to live and grow on. There are dark suns, planets, and moons in space. But everywhere evolution is going on: new seas, mountains, and valleys are being formed. As far off as what you call the Milky Way, suns and planets are inhabited; some of these are not fit for habitation just at present, others have only a very undeveloped form of life; others yet are the ironworks to which I have previously alluded, spheres where spirits are sent who are not worthy to live in a physical life, because they have been rendered undesirable by their former lives.

On some of the very small planets man looks and acts very much like an animal; even the habits of his life being those of four-leggers. The people of Mars are much the same as upon Rhea; and though there are more marked differences in the inhabitants of Jupiter, Juno, and Venus, these differences are only in stature and complexion. Phenomena of a vital character are taking place on these and other planets, under conditions closely resembling those of your earth. Nature's laws are the same on all spheres, and

the creation of life on all planets owes its origin to the same causes. Slight departures in various directions mean only that close attention has been paid for a number of generations to some particular branch or subject. All planets are dependent upon the same essentials of air and water, of which the largest proportion of man, animal, and plant life is made; all have solar light. What differs most is the atmosphere: it is more solid in the less advanced than on the more advanced spheres, as much density is not required under higher conditions to produce heat and the gases of life. The distributing powers of Nature are understood by those whose privilege it has been to advance. They of lower density are, on the other hand, less sensible to extremes of heat and cold. But though man may respond more or less to given conditions, he never becomes, in the physical form, independent of conditions, as all forms of life are closely allied to each other. Life takes on many forms of expression, but it is all one life; you cannot separate matter except by mind, and only by developed mind on other and higher planes than yours.

You think you understand your sun, but you do not. It is not what you believe it to be; it is a planet, and is not hot, but cold. Its rays, which come to you with powers of life and death, are reflected rays; their contact with the atmosphere of your planet, or of other planets, is what makes them seem hot as of their own might. Many men will scoff, and loudly deny this in the name of "science." Yet, stop and ask yourself a question about those rays, which you invest with the power to carry heat of their own across the vast space separating you from the sun, and which, according to your belief, do not cool while passing

through ether; why can the heat of those rays be stopped, then, by a layer of cloud in your atmosphere? Why do they not pierce through mere cloud, still bringing their burning power to the surface of your earth, since they can pierce through ether? I do not know what clever argument you will find for this; but I tell you the simple truth when I reply that clouds cut off more or less of the heat of your sun, according to their density, because they prevent your atmosphere from acting in conjunction with the real power of the rays and creating heat. I say "real power," for it would be folly to deny that power. The power of your sun's rays is indeed such that it affects all other worlds or systems of worlds.

The planet Mars interests you on Rhea perhaps more than any other, because it is not only near you, but placed in particularly good conditions for observation. Yet there are mysteries about it which baffle you. Much of the mystery is explained by the fact that Mars has another planet attached to it—the planet Juno, which you do not yet know, but which you will be forced to know before very long. The smaller planet has been attached to the greater, which is thrice its size, for many centuries, and has occupied different positions. For eight hundred years, now, it has been in its present position—the so-called Hour-glass Sea. You cannot perceive Juno on the outline of Mars against the ether; yet it would be possible for you to see it if you knew how to look. It explains the atmospheric and other phenomena of Mars which puzzle your earth-astronomers, and it will soon be ready to separate and begin a life of its own. When this break occurs, not only Mars, but your earth too, will be

seriously perturbed. Mars has already been subjected to great disturbances in the last few years, from volcanoes and earthquakes which have done much harm and alarmed the population. Many people whose souls once dwelt on Atlantis are living there, and any undue earth-disturbance is apt to frighten them. Atlantis, of which you talk as of an island, was a planet which collided with yours, a less civilised one; Atlantis disappeared in consequence, and much damage was done to Rhea.

Mars represents a higher degree of life than is demonstrated on either Rhea, Juno, or Mercury. Mars' children are scientific; they are both clever and intelligent. One of the things which helped them is that they have not tried to grow up too much. The children are allowed to remain children very long, and to dream as much as they please; but when they start work, they work hard, and make their dreams come true. Electricity and the arts have made wonderful progress there; the educational institutions might serve as models anywhere. The Martians are a sturdy race, and their complexion is either very light or very dark. They are fearless of physical pain, and will endure it for a worthy cause. They have less water on their planet than you have on yours, and so they have devised a remarkable system of irrigation. There is more equality on Mars than on most other planets; birth and money are unimportant in a man's advance, since they recognise ability as the great consideration.

Juno is what we call the sister-planet of Rhea, though less advanced in some respects; its people are younger, but are working and are evolving rapidly. The people have a splendid moral code, so that no sworn contract is needed

to make a man acknowledge he is a father, or a woman acknowledge she is a mother. The climate is somewhat like that of India, but with curious extremes. The general climatic conditions are nearer akin to those of Mercury than to any other planet.

Mercury, being the first sphere, is less advanced than Rhea; coming in almost direct contact with your sun, it is a very hot planet, but with extremes of cold in some regions. To those unpleasant climatic conditions are added other conditions peculiar to its people, who have very little control over themselves. They have much to learn: Sodom and Gomorrah are holding sway there and paralysing the planet's activities, for man must have full control over his being before he can realise life. On Mercury there are more varieties of life than on Rhea, but all need cultivation. Wherever abnormal conditions occur, the destruction of the place comes sooner or later. It is difficult to understand why men and women should reach a vile level which animals would shun. These people have much to undo, and so have those of Rhea who are following in their footsteps. They should understand that they are stopping their progress.

On Venus, Nature has not been interfered with; her children are beautiful, fair and fragile in appearance, but having powerful intellects and great spirituality. They live quite untrammeled by man-made laws, because their whole life is a poem of love, of rhythm, of harmony. They are very near God, as God's expression is in their love, which IS God, where rightly expressed. Therefore while perhaps you would not appreciate the moral standards of Venus, do not attempt comparisons, since the conditions of a highly

evolved planet are always those which have been found necessary. The people of Venus are less tall in stature than you, but have a better understanding of each other; they are likewise more ethereal, because their atmosphere is lighter, and, for this same reason, man there is much freer.

Venus receives less heat from the sun and so does not suffer from extremes of temperature; this is due to the constitution of its atmosphere. If I were to attempt further details of this atmospheric condition, you would not understand, you would only turn it all to ridicule. As it is, with your physical eyes, from Rhea, even when helped by telescopes, you fail to understand what you see because of the difference of conditions. As to spheres, we range Venus as the Seventh. The people are employed in various ways, and general conditions are in a higher state of development than with you. To use earth terms so that you may understand me, their schools and arts and crafts and inventions are very advanced. The people recognise the responsibilities of fatherhood and motherhood, and children are loving and dutiful towards parents. Love being supreme on Venus, its ties suffice, and no form or ceremony is required.

Uranus, Neptune, Otheogo, and many other planets in your immediate neighbourhood are not now inhabited with forms of life which need describing; but life does exist upon them, and through evolution they are finding their way.

Jupiter is a very advanced planet: it is what we call the Fifth Sphere. Its children are larger and darker than those of Rhea and Mars, as the masculine element is more marked on Jupiter; they are distinguished by qualities of brain and heart, and their occupations are various, as is the case for

men on all planets. They do beautiful work in brass and clay, and work in linen and other stuffs. While their factories and shops are magnificent, they are not very physical in their desires, and there is less unrest found on Jupiter than on many other planets. They have excellent educational institutions, and have gone far not only in the arts but in the sciences. Great rivers are navigated; seas, oceans, and lands are used for the utility of man. Their airships are more advanced and less dangerous than yours; their sea-ships are palaces larger than anything attempted on Rhea; but Jupiter has also had, of late, its disasters on land and sea and in the air. The spirit of invention is not so advanced as on Rhea or on Mars; but the people are more advanced in learning and are more sensible. Just now they are disturbed about rumours of war on Rhea. The line of natural tendencies is followed in schools: the child is not warped or cramped, he runs wild, like the animal, for years; then, when he commences to think, lives much longer than on any other planet, because he has been allowed time to grow. I would also remark that a child there is given a special thing to learn, and only general knowledge of other things. The people of Jupiter believe in a future state, and have frequent spirit-communications; they have some wonderful prophets. But with all this advancement, they are a severe people—an eye for an eye; and the evil-doer is not dealt with kindly. More feeling for brother-man must come to Jupiter. They need spiritual evolution.

Many of the planets I have been telling you about understand etheric conditions, and are anxious to establish communication between the spheres of life. Etheric waves will be found the means to be used in connection with a

sort of telephone receiver. Many are working at such discoveries who will stumble accidentally upon another current with which they have not yet reckoned.

Spirits from these planets are scattered all over your earth in your flesh-houses, just as people from Rhea are on the other planets. This exchange is made because varied experiences are needed; yet people from one plane find it difficult to adapt themselves to conditions on other planes.

Your world is a wonderful place for obtaining knowledge, because of its mineral and electrical forces, many of which are still unknown to men themselves. In these special branches and inventions, Rhea, which we reckon as the Second Sphere evolved very nearly to the Third, offers special inducements to spirits, just as practical training or calm understanding of life is to be gained on Jupiter, discipline on Mars, and the correct meaning of love on Venus. You have much to learn from several among these planets, in regard to education. It grieves me to hear the parents of Rhea always saying "Don't!" to their children. For goodness' sake say "Do!" If you did not call so much attention to wrong, it would not be so apparent to your children. Many a child tries doing a thing you call bad, just for the fun of it. Then, again, bad blood may be handed down from generation to generation, and the recalling of conditions helps them to spring up again. Many of you from other planets are living in that particular kind of a physical house for the first time, so you are keen to try any new sensation which might not be suspected if it were not advertised so much.

We know Rhea better than you do: first, because we can see it as a whole and you cannot; secondly, because we can

compare it with our knowledge of other planets; and, thirdly, because we are not limited, as you limit yourselves, to conventional uses of such instruments as you have, and also to the habit of falling back upon rule or recognised hypothesis to explain away anything which might seem astonishing in a planetary aspect. Not that we do not need knowledge and experience, but only that we learn to profit by them truly. Spirits from lower spheres cannot visit higher spheres at will, but spirit from the higher spheres may go wherever they please and choose their form of work. Yet to visit an unknown sphere is not an easy matter even for a spirit, and one furthermore needs a competent and intelligent guide, or one may not grasp all the new lessons being taught by Nature in its various forms.

What I have to tell you about the other planets of your solar system may interest or amuse you, but cannot do you much good, since nothing seriously profits a man in the way of information unless he has gone to work and dug it out for himself. Remarks about your own planet, however, may be of applied utility to you by suggesting new lines of work. I can hear in advance the laughs of derision which will greet some of the statements I am about to make. Many of my friends in the spirit have asked me not to make these statements, although true, because I shall be laughed to scorn. But I have no fear of such ridicule, because I speak of things I have seen with my own eyes. It is only a question of time for others to see also. When you have been brought to recognise every word of it as an accepted fact, you may remember that I warned you in advance, and said that I spoke of what I knew.

Greater discoveries than have ever yet been made await you; and some of your old inventions are waiting to be properly applied. But whatever use man may make of machinery, he will have to be independent of it a thousand years hence, as he was a thousand years ago, or he will allow machinery to become his master instead of making it his slave. Therefore the evil spirit of militarism will be given full sway, with the inevitable results.

A thorough study, first of your earthly atmosphere, and then of ether itself, will lead you to the greatest discoveries. You have had the fish-age philosophy; you are proud of having attained what might be called the earth-age maturity; you will find yourselves only after having mastered an understanding of the air, and then will come communication with other worlds. With the help of electricity your spirits will then be directed by their concentrated thought through the channels of air and of ether, just as ours are now directed. This new law will not apply to aerial travels alone, but also to your navigation of the waters, which you will understand better for having understood the air.

You will find a new metal, Creto, and mine it in great quantities; it will be light, stronger, safer than any metal you know at present, and from it you will build your sea-ships and air-ships; you will invent new machinery for use in connection with creto, and find new uses for electricity.

Your boats of the future will be propelled by the electro-magnetic forces of ether, and guided by thought-power from the brain of man. You will use oil very much, for fuel; coal will cease to be used. Your air-ships will be safe and practical, and you will invent a sort of wing-arrangement that will give to man the power of birds:

a whole new industry will spring from this, angel-wings will be made by the million. Your sea-boats, too, will have adjustable wings to protect them from an inrush of waters in case of accident; the new model of ships will be almost entirely under water, with only one large deck above; yet many of you will continue to prefer the old model. All this will tend to decrease the gravity of accidents, yet they will continue to occur on land and sea and in the air. Nothing material was ever made to last in the same shape; you must have change, as through change comes progress. Only, you may learn to select with great care the men put in charge of all the various parts of a ship. In your desire to save, you do not practise real economy. Too many places are given as favours to men who do not understand their responsibilities. Every man should have a technical understanding of his work, even to the shovelling of coal.

Your automobile is only a start in the direction of independent travelling; the new machine will be smaller, cheaper, safer. As for our good faithful friends—horses—they will cease to be used as beasts of burden, and will pass beyond your plane, becoming extinct within a few hundred years; their frames will be kept in museums, as curiosities for children to study. Horses are not the only animals evolved beyond the Rhea plane: elephants, tigers, and serpents are now ready to leave your plane permanently.

With the aid of strong glasses and reflected light you will discover new wonders of the sea, including huge monsters whose existence you do not suspect. There are wonderful degrees and colours of fishes, which the flesh-eye of man has never seen: creatures with heads, arms,

legs—almost a human body. The mermaid myth is not all myth, since millions of fish so closely resemble man that, if you were to see them, you might well believe in many of the so-called fables of the sea. All land animals, including man himself, have excellent representation in the waters of the deep. All life is intricately interwoven.

Your planet has a definite cycle, the same as man, and it may end its life: not that I mean absolutely, but great changes will undoubtedly take place. The Persians and the Prophets of the Old Testament referred frequently to the latter days and the wars and rumours of war, the quaking of the earth, and of a new heaven and a new earth. No truer saying was ever uttered, as your war has given birth to a new heaven and a new earth, as the old is passing away. Your earth, in its continuous decay of vegetation, which generates ammonia and gases, also the letting out of your oil and natural gases, does not absolutely assure the individual life of Rhea, as it exposes it to the danger of a conflagration, and volcanoes and earthquakes will be of frequent occurrence. That might cause the circumambient air to ignite; still, it could not mean real death, only the end of that special cycle; but it would demonstrate the changing of life-forms. I have no desire to alarm any of you; my only object is to point out the uncertainty of all things depending upon material conditions, as all material must change form as it evolves in that way. I have spoken with many men who have witnessed like conditions. They were more or less warned by the curious working of Nature for days before this disintegration took place, and they all speak of the marvel of it. It seemed as if all things were

falling asunder, which they were, and in the twinkling of an eye the real values were made known to them. Speaking of discoveries, we almost dread them, as such fearful uses are made of them. To hear men casually speak of machines that will destroy brother-man pains us, and we all the more realise the great need of love in your world. There can be no peace before universal war, that had to come before universal peace could come; but a glorious peace will come, and a better understanding will exist between the nations themselves, and the causes for conflict will have dispersed. Men will pray, not in mere words but in deeds, and work—real work—will be honoured among all nations, as all nations must revere each other and recognise the rights of each other, before proper propagation can take place. Your suffering world is having a hard but valuable lesson, and will be all the better, for sorrow is a great leveller. Men in every degree of life are joining our ranks, and they are filled with varying and conflicting emotions. I will let a recent arrival tell his own story.

* * * * *

I had been standing for a fortnight in a trench partly filled with water, and within a few hundred feet of the enemy's trenches. The first days of my cramped quarters were dreadful, but I soon became accustomed to it, and did not mind. At night we would move about more freely. We made the best of a bad position by joking as the enemy's bullets whizzed over our heads, often exploding in the trenches, and nipping off one of our members. We did what we could for the friend whose fate would be ours, perhaps, any moment, but fear did not play a part. We

had no fear. We had seen so many people die that it seemed quite natural, and it only meant one more or less. We gave no thought further than that. The memory of those beloved and dear ones at home did not make us unhappy; we felt that all that mattered was to get at our enemy, and exterminate them if possible. The feeling grew so strong that we would expose ourselves to useless danger to get at them, often only to be nipped; but the other or real side of the question did not enter in. There was no time to dwell upon what became of the spirit in the man, if he happened to have one, which many of us did not believe seriously, although most of us recognised a power outside ourselves. The faces of those dying boys would often reveal a curious story of doubt, and, in a few cases, fear; but they were so concerned with the purely physical part of it that little else mattered. I myself was one of that number. My legs being stiff and cold, I got out of the trenches at the first shadow of night to have a run up and down. I did not run far, as I was shot. It seemed as if a cannon was right at my head, but the noise was caused by the bursting of shrapnel, and by the suddenness of my death, which was instantaneous. I felt myself fall, and all became black. A curious feeling of rushing waters: then the scene changed. I was still on the battlefield, with bullets all about me, and with men running to and fro. I attempted to walk. I was different! What had happened? I felt myself stumble over a body. I looked down to see who it was. The shock of that moment! It was my dead body, still warm, but *dead*. I felt myself. Yes, it was "me" all right. I had two bodies, one on the ground and the other standing. A curious feeling came over me. I

said: "Well, *that's me dead,* and that's me here." It all bewildered me.

Darkness was coming on so fast that it made conditions difficult. I went back to the trenches. I spoke to the boys, but they did not answer me. They paid no attention to me. I touched my friend on the right of me; he paid no attention. I could hear them talk, but could not hear all that they were saying. Finally my friend said, "I am afraid that Charlie has been nipped; he has been gone the deuce of a long time. Let's have a look round." They got out, so did I. They had difficulty in looking, because they did not dare make a light. At last they found my other body, and said, "Poor devil! a good chap; but he might have known better, and waited until it was really dark." They picked me up and brought me nearer to our trench, perhaps thinking that I was still alive. I was, but not in that body, and they could not see or hear the real "me." A feeling of loneliness came over me. I missed my other self; I did not know what to do. I could not help, and what could I do? Just at that point my mother and father came to me, and embraced me and said, "My poor son, I am glad that you are out of it; we have been very near all the time, and I helped you out of your flesh body, but I could not make myself clear to you for some time. I was almost despairing of doing so, as your whole thoughts were directed to your other body, and the trench, and to your horrible thoughts of war; but, son, you are only one among the thousands that have come and will come. It is all very sad that men want to kill each other off. There are many ways of settling disputes and war, for machine guns, aircraft, and huge water monsters are

not real war or fair play. We think the present conflict very, very terrible; but let us talk of other things, there is much to be seen to now that you are over."

We walked, or glided, over the broken and torn flesh of the earth that was thrown up to protect us from the enemy's bullets. We passed right over their trenches and heard them discussing us and what they thought of our plans. Soon the plane of war was passed. I was beginning to feel great fatigue. My mother, noticing me, said, "Son, forgive me; I almost forgot the newness of your body and that you would soon get tired; but I want to take my darling away from all *this* into a place where love and peace reign and where you can feel that we *love.* There we can talk it all over." I said, "Mother, I can go no further." She and father came, and, seating themselves on the ground, they made me comfortable between them. I soon felt quite restored. All the fatigue left me and a feeling of happiness came over me: a curious, almost selfish, joy that even the memory of those terrible trenches could not take from me, although my mind would go back to those struggling souls who were suffering from cold and hunger; even the functions of the body were made so difficult, as we did not dare move at times. I saw many people walking and talking, not excitedly, but quietly. I said, "Mother, I am dead; but it is so *wonderful* to be *dead.* You and father have scarcely changed; to see you both looking so well is splendid. Where is little Victor, Uncle Mark, and all the others? They died, too. Do they know about this war? Do tell me what they think of it."

My mother said, "We think it most unnecessary; but the history of your world Rhea, and Mars, has been one

settled only by blood, and it will take a very long time before killing is out of their system. But, son, let us speak of other things. Nobody can kill you now, and you cannot kill anybody. But you will meet many of the opposing party over here. I am glad to say that death of the flesh takes from them all thought for revenge and hatred; only pity and longing to stop the slaughter possess them. There are great peace meetings being held, but the feeling is so intense on all sides that any real help is difficult, as we must work through the mentality. I am glad to say I am told that out of all this great changes will come that will prohibit any like condition coming up for several hundred years, and poor man will have a chance to grow and gain."

I said, "Mother, darling, you are not doing as you suggested: not to speak of the war." She smiled and said, "Quite right, my child; forgive me, I shall try not to speak of it again." My father had said very little up to this time; he had always been a quiet man of very few words. He said, "I feel so grateful to God that you are here, where we can live truly and be happy in the mere joy of living. I have had a very busy time of it, and so will you be busy, as this life is worked on such different lines. We are not seeking to destroy, but to build. Destruction does not enter into our lives or work. In the first place, there is no ownership, and there are no rulers except those who rule by *right,* not might. Each soul is a soul dependent upon himself for growth and advancement. We have all Nature to study and define. We are thorough in our researches, we enjoy all that we do. The rush and stress of time does not possess us; we work because we love working,

and because there are so many fields to work in. Nature is inexhaustible in its resources; we are always finding new paths, also making new discoveries of old ones. Men, women, and children are happy because they are occupied. They have no time or desire to plan the destruction of others. Construction is all-absorbing and interesting. The varieties and conditions are many and thrilling. At this moment so many are being rushed to this side, people that need help; some of them are in a very bad way, full of hate and envy; they have murder and slaughter in their brain, all their good pictures of life have been turned to the wall, and those dear people have much to do to get out of that condition which, of course, we look upon as a phase of 'insanity.' They are not impossible; it only requires a little patience and love for them to see the way."

I said, "Father, I am afraid that I have a lot of hate in me; I liked killing off the enemy quite as much as the rest of them. I would watch them fall with no pity in my heart, only anxious to kill as many as I could. I know that I am responsible for quite a few, but, if they are faring as well as I am, I am not sorry, because the poor chaps are out of that hell of *fire*. I am afraid, if we had known about all this, that it might have worked both ways. Men would not care to live, and the desire to kill each other would either cease or become intensified. I do not think any of us liked the killing, but it meant victory. We felt that we must win. That went beyond anything else. If I am to meet all of those people, I do not know that it is going to be so pleasant after all."

Father looked grieved when he said, "Son, would you

have liked killing their spirit-body as well as their flesh-body?" He surprised me; those words brought me to my senses. *"No, no; a thousand times, no!* I am glad that I did not have the power to kill in reality, and that I shall meet them. I am only sorry for the conditions."

My Uncle Mark came to me, holding out both hands, saying, "Well, young man, you had to get at them, didn't you? A chip of the old block." He himself had been killed in battle not long since: that was what he meant. Victory, my little brother, came running to me. We had always been great friends; his death was a great sorrow; he had died of throat trouble. The agony of that dear boy haunted me for a long time. Here he was so well and happy, he looked the picture of health, his cheeks were like roses; the old ill look was gone. I am, indeed, very happy. I have met so many of the dear friends who had gone on: each and all have a look of calm contentment and joy. After all, nothing much matters but our growth and our happiness, which comes when we follow the laws of Nature, and do not try to make foreign laws, and thereby get into turmoil and strife. We hear of the war, and of the suffering of those dear souls who think they are getting freedom by killing each other. It cannot make us unhappy here, because that which is counted as physical pain is the balm needed to make them see and understand. They are soon brought face to face with *facts,* and out of their unrest and pain an understanding comes. Man must realise that conflict never really settled any question; there is a safer way—understanding of the laws of life and the rights of others; also the feeling that peoples of other countries are not quite as good or cultured as we are. It is all a vast

mistake to think for a moment that one individual has any more right to expect more from the Heavenly Father than He is willing to grant to any of His other children. We must learn to respect and regard the rights and desires of others. Harmony ought to reign supreme in your world. I love to say "my world," because I love the dear old place with its little and big worms that want to be so important and to rule out anybody that dares to be different. How sorry I am for them! I would be glad to lose many, many earth bodies if that would help to show the way; but war is not the way, now nor at any time, to settle disputes, but I feel confident that a way will be shown. This war has not been in vain, for men are thinking of the tragedy of it, and are praying, and those that seem invisible are watching and praying with them. It will be a memorable epoch in the history of the world's events. The courage, cruelty, and violence that have relentlessly been spent, victims and martyrs standing side by side; the battlefield with its curious haze after the smoke of battle; arisen souls rising above the horror of it all, being freed from its hardness and the perplexity of the mind; amazement and anxiety for those dear friends still fighting; the contemplation of life in death you have lost, and yet have now so abundantly. The stripping of earthly gain has clothed us in the comfort and love of God: soon calmness and quiet take hold of us. I am separated, yet joined in love as never before. I would that all could understand. Do tell them for me.

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This is only one story of a thousand that could be told if man would keep to his study of life, and seek to learn

more of the wonderful world in which he lives, instead of trying to take off certain corners of the earth and labelling them as private property. He ought to make use of his valuable discoveries which we so greatly admire, and which would help him to grow and gain, instead of killing each other off like rabbits; then the Harmony that I have been trying to tell you about could go on and on without being disturbed by the unnecessary conditions that you bring upon yourselves in your narrowness and unexpressed love. Do not bury your love so deep that it will take millions of years to find it; have free and easy expression of it. We pity your fighting world, and we would that we could change all the conditions that seem to make for war. This spirit of militarism and iron rule is not necessary. Men, hundreds of men, have tried it before and have failed. It cannot make for success. Why not spend your time in making excavations into your interesting and marvellous earth and bringing forth its rich treasures, instead of digging trenches, and having your fields reek with the blood of nations? Egypt, Persia, Greece, and the so-called new world, America, will give evidence of millions and millions of years of life, and you will establish links that will prove that civilisation has been going on a very long time, and that your "time" is only one so-called civilised "time." People are living here that lived in your world, and who fought and died as you are fighting and dying, but much more humanely, as there was a semblance of a fair fight, not mere matching of machinery. They, too, thought that they owned territory in their days. They have long gotten over any such illusion, as the earth has made so many changes, caused by the natural forces of

Nature, that they completely fail to recognise any of their so-called former beholdings. What is now Central Europe was a large sea, I am told. Too bad that it is not a sea now: there would be less to fight over!

As we look into your earth we see a vast sea underneath most of England and Holland, connecting itself as it does with the waters of America. Volcanoes and earthquakes have caused great changes to take place. It will take some time to make you of the earth realise that in reality you do not own anything, and that consequently you have nothing to quarrel over. You seem to get your lessons in every possible way and yet you do not see. It only the more proves that evolution must mean spiritual evolution as well as intellectual evolution. The Pacific Coast, and parts of the Mediterranean, and Chili, Mexico, and Central Europe, will suffer from earthquakes and volcanic disturbances; the same influences which cause volcanoes, water and fire, may continue for many years, and with your terrible wars will change the face of many nations. I regret that these conditions which I foresee mean pain. I would that there were no pain, even at birth or death, among men, but pain is inevitably associated with any opening or breaking away, and we must remember that pain often means growth, and war, advancement. Christ came with a sword as well as with love, and when you have finished the matching of machinery—which is all your modern war amounts to in your so-called twentieth century of civilisation—you can have peace for the asking. Your storms will blow themselves out whenever you are ready for them to pass away, and when you have for ever done away with your militarism, and the evils that are

caused by it. Your world is a world of enlightenment, but its progress is being sadly interfered with by the iron rule imposed upon it. It is a meaningless strife that will not bear good fruits, and it is all wrong.

Love each other and cease to be wrathful and envious of the growth of nations as well as of individuals. We have the victors and failures of many wars in our midst, many of whom have been struggling for centuries to wipe from their souls the stain of blood. You are making of beautiful Rhea such a hell that even in our ironworks we do not find like conditions. We have no need of new ironworks, one is quite sufficient; it is not overcrowded, thank God, as men soon learn the lessons of love and Harmony, and quit it for places that offer better facilities for the learning of God's laws. We plead for more love, so that your souls may become free souls, and that you may find employment in your Father's vineyard; also to become the collectors of the olives, fruits, and grains needed to sustain and produce life. You are put into the world to replenish it, not to destroy it. Everything is crying out for co-partnership and attention; to more freely get the great visions of life you must the more fully get into touch with your Father and with His children.

We of the spirit obtain glimpses of the future after having experienced a number of lives evolved through many stages, consequently all of us have not powers of insight; for those who have it the curtain is lifted—we perceive existing conditions with their tendencies of growth toward other conditions, visions come of things as they are to be in the course of months or years. Some of you on earth have the faculty developed to a certain degree.

These mental pictures are sometimes impressed upon you in dreams. I will give you an example which will better enable you to understand both yourselves and us in this respect. The man who has scaled a mountain sees in one great comprehensive picture the valleys and foothills and plains near and far, which were scattered and incomplete, and often meaningless, when he stood on the level and sought to see beyond. I saw the revolution of China many years ago, but I pretend to no great powers in doing so, as all the conditions of that Empire led me to come to those conclusions. The various earthquakes in California and other places were also revealed to me, as was also the loss of the *Titanic,* the war of a year ago, as well as the present war. I have had frequent talks about it with various people. My first suggestions are always met with scoffings, as are all my suggestions that do not follow the ordinary line of conversations; but life is all-absorbing, and we must seek to know and understand, and prepare ourselves for conditions when they come.

There is nothing visionary about the knowing of coming events, as they cast their shadow, and world-events, such as are gripping the heartstrings of the nations, cannot be great secrets when every child has conflict written on his face, and when you go about condemning each other for having been born in the wrong place. You try to tie up your oceans and lands and try to keep people off the grass. If you look sanely into the visions that I have had, you will not find them wonderful or marvellous, and certainly not mysterious. Why truths should be called mysteries passes my understanding, but man has ever been trying to fool himself as well as others. All your unrest

could only lead to one result, and you have it. It is what you have brought upon yourselves, and I hope and pray with my whole heart that it will not be a useless lesson, and that out of this fearful carnage good may come; but the jealousies of the growth of nations must cease. The East, which has been pressing toward the West, bringing as it does its ideals and ideas, should be of valuable help in the West. Unless help is mutual, it is of no benefit. It is well for the East to get the commercialism of the West; it is an even balance that is needed for the world's welfare.

I again repeat my note of warning against the spirit of militarism, as it will interfere with the world's evolution, for you cannot separate man from planet or planet from man, and anything that tends to stop the circulation of its life makes for its downfall. You need to cultivate respect for the wishes of others, and be benefited by that which is able to benefit you. Too much religion or too much commercialism or militarism is harmful, and leads to destruction. Live practical lives; do not become fanatical; keep your feet firmly planted on the first rounds of the ladder, and only ascend round by round as you are morally, spiritually, and mentally ready to do so. Do not believe that spirits generally know of the future, for they do not; many only have the power to read in the minds of man their conditions, which they often construe into clever and convincing stories from what they see. The real reading of the conditions of life is indeed very useful if done by competent men able to comprehend, but we are not infallible when it comes to individuals. We are much surer of national affairs, as they are not so difficult to

understand as are people, because they are so changeable. But I am glad that they are changeable. A man has a right to dispose of himself as he chooses so long as he does not violate the great laws. I strongly advise against your becoming dependent upon any man, no matter what plane that man may be on. You must think and act for yourself; and as we only get our lessons from life by the making of failures, planets are formed and changed by the convulsions of Nature. They come normally and rhythmically, so that they are surest of all. It is at very rare intervals that a really great vision comes to us, and that is reserved for a few who have developed those powers of meditation, concentration, and prayer, and by the frequent asking to be shown the way.

And to help you to realise that the old earth must grow, that you have brains but that there are other kinds of brains, each thing has an intelligence. Suns, moons, planets, have mighty intelligences. You do not want to overrate your own and become conceited, as we are but a part of the great Universe and all other things are a part, and we cannot separate ourselves from other forms of life. God must have workers for His foundations. Some foundations were laid millions and millions of years ago, others are being laid now, new worlds created and new planets formed. We can help to lay the foundations, and perhaps to lay a corner-stone and talk to it so that it may understand its duties; in fact, we are all stones, and those among us soon might become corner-stones. I am glad to say that the inhabitants of other planets are not in the same sorry condition as you are. You seem constantly to be fussing over nothing; you are largely responsible

for not finding work to do, for not scattering over the world to find new fields, if need be, instead of staying all together; but what, perhaps, has much to do with your condition is, that Rhea is off her axis, and that until she is properly adjusted, calm cannot prevail among men generally. Your brains give you power to understand much if you would use them to better advantage, and would try to free yourselves from thoughts that make you but prisoners in your bodies, instead of being free agents to work where work is needed, and to allow all other things the same divine privilege. All growth comes slowly but surely, and it is only by effort, and often extreme effort, that we get the best results.

FIFTEENTH LETTER

Lord Sandwich's letter on healing—The need for health, spiritual and physical—Man is living for a purpose, as are planets—A right understanding of faith-cures—The danger of unscientific practices—God is all-powerful, and will is a great force, but disease does exist—The three diseases into which all ailments on the Rhea plane are divided—The vital questions of prisoners and white slavery.

KNOWING that the readers of Dr. Coulter's letters would be interested to learn of the wonderful healing power of Lord Sandwich, I have asked him to set forth in letter-form a detailed account of his marvellous cures. Many of the cures herein mentioned I know about. Lord Sandwich has very modestly asserted them. I also take the liberty of speaking about my son's cure. He was seriously injured in the left knee during a football match some two years ago, and, as a consequence, suffered great pain. Lord Sandwich, in four treatments, cured him completely, and he has not had a return of the pain. The cure was effected more than a year ago. It is with great pleasure and thanks to Lord Sandwich that I insert his letter.

CHARLOTTE HERBINE.

Dec. 28th, 1914.

DEAR MRS. HERBINE,—You ask me to give you an account of the Power of Healing which has been manifested in me. In 1913 I wrote to Sir William Cooper a

letter on the subject, which appeared in his book, *Where Two Worlds Meet.* It is very difficult to write briefly on a subject which gives occasion for the most opposite and varied opinions.

There are many who, having been healed, have obviously the most complete faith.

There are many more, who have been witnesses of the healing, who have a like faith.

There are some who, having been witnesses, endeavour to explain it away as being the result of accident in any single instance, or as coincidence in the case of several instances.

There are many who, through ignorance or prejudice, reject and scorn the idea.

People are generally unwilling to believe what they do not understand, and ask me to explain. I have nothing to explain—I judge by results. The Truth exists, whether believed or not.

The Professions which are the most concerned on the subject are the Clerical and the Medical. There are many in both professions who have absolute faith in my power, but the great majority are very antagonistic, and I do not think it difficult to imagine the reasons.

I endeavour to do my duty in the work entrusted to me, absolutely indifferent to ignorance and prejudice.

Except when directed to offer my services, I never offer to attend upon any one. As you know, I have treated people of all classes of society and of various religious faiths.

I have been offered money—which, I need hardly add, I have never accepted, even for a charitable institution: I

mention this, as there are healers who devote their lives to the work, who are necessarily obliged to accept money for their living, and who are therefore suspected and abused. There may be, I have no doubt, Charlatans in this as in every condition of life.

The knowledge of this power was made known to me in 1908, but I now recognise the fact that in previous years the power existed in me. I will quote one instance in proof. A gardener came to me, many years ago, suffering from sciatica, and the following letter will describe what occurred:—

Feb. 3rd, 1914.

About two years ago I heard an address Lord Sandwhich gave in Brampton. His Lordship asked me afterwards if I had ever heard of his power of healing. I said "No"; but I reminded him of my going to see him some seven years ago, when I told him that I had been suffering great pains from Sciatica, and unable to do any work. He took me into the Boothy and examined me, and put his hand on my thigh. The pain left me, and I have never had it since.

WILLIAM J. SEE.

Naturally, from the many and varied experiences which I have had, each of which is equally satisfactory and sublime to myself, I am indisposed to select individual cases; in cases of sickness I am obviously unable, except in cases of fever or such-like, to observe at once the improvement; but in cases where pain is relieved, the result of my treatment has been often obvious to myself.

I was visiting a servant who was ill in hospital when he

called my attention to a man lying in an opposite bed, who was suffering agonies from an internal abscess, for which he was to undergo an operation in the following week. I went across to the man; he appeared too bad to speak, and I did not say a word to him; I laid my hands on him, with silent prayer.

Two days afterwards, when again visiting my servant, the man called me, and said, "Sir, there must be magic in your hands. Do you remember laying your hand upon me the other day? I was in terrible agony; the whole of my pain left me, and I have not had it since." This man underwent his operation. I saw him during his recovery, and he always said, "I have not had any pain since that day you came to me."

Before being examined before Bishop Ryle's Commission at Westminster I looked up a few cases, and visited this man. His name was Osborne. He had lived at Ramsey St. Mary's, and had now moved to Peterborough. This was a year or so afterwards. He told me he had since been in hospital, and had had external abscesses; but, he added, "My Lord, I have never had any pain since that day you came to me," and afterwards wrote me the following letter:—

32 Wellington Street, Peterborough.

In April 1911 I was a patient in the Huntingdon Hospital. I was suffering intense agony from abscesses on the kidneys. Lord Sandwich came to see me; I was too bad to speak to him, with pain. He laid his hand on me, all my pain vanished, and I never had it again.

Yours truly, GEORGE OSBORNE.

On the occasion of my second visit to Osborne there was a boy in the hospital who had undergone an operation for meningitis, and whose cries were disturbing the patients in the wards. A doctor asked me if I thought I could do anything for the boy. I went with him to the bedside of the boy, whose head was swathed in bandages. I laid my hand upon him, with prayer.

The boy laid his hand on mine and became perfectly still. Two or three days afterwards the matron took me to see the boy. His bandages had been removed. She asked the boy if he had ever seen me before. The boy said, "Yes, that is the gentleman who took all my pain away." I think these are fair instances of the relief of pain. I will quote one of disease of the mind.

A clergyman of the Church of England told me that his wife was in a wretched condition, suffering from delusions of a very distressing nature, and from insomnia, and asked me to treat her.

After my first visit she was able to sleep, and took to her music, to which she was devoted and which she had entirely abandoned. After my fifth visit she was perfectly well. I quote their letters:—

Cambridge, April 25th, 1912.

My Lord,—I write to say how glad I am to find my wife steadily improving. There is no doubt whatever about the matter. She began to improve after your Lordship's first visit, and to-day a very definite step forward seems to have been taken; when your Lordship returns, I hope an opportunity will present itself for you to come again.

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

W. H. R.

Cambridge, July 1st, 1912.

DEAR LORD SANDWICH,—I feel that I ought to write to you myself, to thank you for all you did for me and to tell you how well I am. I can assure you that I do not think myself such a dreadful person now.

Yours sincerely, M. R.

I treated a man who had experienced a fall while roller-skating, and who had been paralysed for a year or more; when I first saw him, he told me that he had no sensation below the waist; he also suffered from very bad abscesses, the consequence of blood-poison after his accident. I attended him for over two years from time to time, and the following is his report:—

121 *Green Lane, Clissold Park,*
London, N.

MY LORD,—During June 1909, whilst roller-skating, I had the misfortune to fall backwards. At the time I did not feel any very serious injury, but about two months afterwards I felt a sudden weakness come over me, so that I felt it a great strain to keep on my legs; this continued until I was forced to go to bed. In the morning I was utterly unable to move; I was taken to hospital. I was absolutely powerless and devoid of any feeling from the lower ribs to my toes. I remained in this state for a period of four months. Very gradually I began to regain sensation, and after nine months in my bed I was allowed to get up for a short time. I made very slow progress. I left hospital for my home, and remained practically in the same condition until the commencement of the year 1911. I then entered the Huntingdon Hospital. During this time your Lordship visited the hospital, and having

heard of your wonderful powers, I ventured to ask you to help me back to health.

From that time I began to recover; gradually the feeling began to return. After three months' treatment I was able to leave the hospital. Your Lordship treated me during a period of two years. I was able to start work again in an office.

I have received the greatest benefit possible from your Lordship's unfailing treatment, for which words fail me to express my gratitude, the doctors having given up hopes of my walking again.

I beg to remain,
Your Lordship's grateful servant,
WALTER F. MASON.

I have treated old and young, high and low, in palaces and cottages, in a Mohammedan mosque, in a Hindoo convent—indeed, wherever I have been directed to do so. I have been begged to visit all parts of the world; I have been offered large sums of money; I have undergone very varied experiences; I have met with unbounded confidence and with contemptuous disdain—all this is nothing to me. I endeavour to do my duty when called upon, and that is enough.

I think it is unnecessary to multiply instances of recovery under my treatment. If I were at all sensitive upon the subject, it would be beyond words painful to me to hear and to know that many people, even old friends, disbelieve me; if what I assert is not true, they must look upon me as an impostor of the worst type; but in truth I am too grateful for the gift to worry myself concerning the incredulous.

I hope to do my best in the exercise of my power through the mercy of God. When possible I attend all who ask me—but obviously I have many other duties in life, and without neglecting these it is impossible for me to attend the innumerable applications I have received from all parts of the world.

Yours very sincerely,

SANDWICH.

Healing of the sick was one of the great works of the Master. He gave the power to His disciples to heal and cast out devils. That power has been given to few in the later days, and among them so honoured is Lord Sandwich. He is earnest, honest, and upright, and does what he can to relieve suffering in many ways quite aside from his gift. The power of Healing is indeed a rare gift, and those who have it are doubly blessed. C. G. H.

* * * * *

A healthy body is necessary for work. I do not mean physical health alone, but also the health of the spirit—cleanness of thought and freedom from melancholy.

Your life and its consequences depend upon the amount of the self you put into it. No man lives unless he lives in all parts of his body.

Man is in three parts, as is all life on the Rhea plane. You can live in the roots of your being and grovel with things that creep; or you can ascend and get a better view of the valley of life itself with its sorrows and desires; or you can reach the upper tabernacle where the spirit knows aspiration and inspiration. You may live in all parts if you are clever, but you cannot limit yourself to one if you

would really live in the true sense. It is the proper use of every fibre of his being that makes the perfect man.

That marvellous temple of the body needs a deal of care, but it is worth it all. The body renders you great service, and during your lease of it you should see that it has plenty of light and air. A man who was sixty years old said to me, "I have never been ill before; I have always felt well, no headaches, no pain." I soon learned that his father's and mother's people came from careful, healthy families, and that their tastes were all simple; they did not go to excess in anything, but lived normal lives.

Man may begin to amend his ways when he realises that he is the victim of his own evil deeds, and that libertines and hypocrites must pay the price by years of undoing until the sin is erased; that all lines which bring discord must disappear; that where lives have been wrecked through the will of another, the wrecker pays the price, and no death-bed confession can settle it; that you stand alone responsible for yourself, and that no one has the right or the power to help you until you see yourself as you are.

It gives you no pleasure to make others mourn; no man has ever reached the level of enjoying the suffering caused by him, unless he is insane and living in a physical house that cannot be worked properly. This takes place because of the impure lives which many of you lead. The material used to build a house must be clean and sound. You cannot build a sane body out of rotten materials, and the souls, the spirits that inhabit such houses, are not held responsible. Often these houses are peopled by those who must endure such an object-lesson, because their previous

lives have been responsible for giving infirm bodies to other spirits; they have wrecked temples in their lust and selfishness; and they are forced to expiate in poverty-stricken houses.

The early Christians sacrificed their bodies, believing that by submitting the flesh to torture they were attaining God. They were great souls, and have been able by their manner of life and of death to lead multitudes towards God. But the new love is not self-torture, it is knowledge of God which begins with knowledge of self. In union there is strength, and a house cannot be divided. If one part of your house fails to respond to the other parts and is not strengthened, then the whole will fall. If you do not inhabit your house in sympathy and understanding, then you are playing a shameful part in life. Life is a serious obligation, you have a big contract on your hands. Life is not simply eating and breathing. It is the vibration of the spirit in every part of your being, it is the conserving of your forces in the development of every department.

You are living for a purpose, as are planets; everything has its uses; the grasses and herbs of the earth are meant to sustain you and heal your ills. Remember that mind rules matter where the mind is strong; but when the mind is weak and easily moved by suggestion, then matter rules. Think well-thoughts; get away from sick-ideas as you would from an intimate friendship which you know to be harmful. A man often imagines himself dreadfully ill, and sends himself to the grave, just through fear, twenty years before he ought to go. Your physical bodies can stand a great many hard thumps; dying is not an easy matter. Some men live all their lives just in order to die, feeding them-

selves on drugs to help to keep up the illusion of bodily illness, whereas others who are busy have no time to be ill.

Not that diseases do not exist; they do, but not to the extent you believe. Bodies become sick; less sick, if you learn self-control; but there are germs which do exist and cause conditions which mean death or change. Change is beautiful, but there would be less of it if attempts were not made to deny the existence of illness. Healing by prayer is not a new thought; it has been practised for thousands of years, as I have said, and also healing by suggestion; but there are times when both fail, and then man may know he has finished his work. At other times, foreign substances get into the flesh, and you cannot deny these. But if a Doctor, after studying medicine properly, were to work in connection with suggestion, there would be many more cures. And I am glad to say that Doctors and Healers will work in harmony in the near future, and much good will come to the world when the marvels of prayer and suggestion are proven. The hand of man when directed by the will of God is a soothing balm that dispels pain.

The Physicians must recognize that there are cases that will not respond to them, and the Healers also must recognize the value of the herbs of the earth used scientifically by the Physicians. There is much need of concord and harmony between them. Any new, or, I should say, new-old departure is always fraught with difficulty, as man invariably is cautious about the things that will not harm him and not cautious about the things that will.

A teaching that I dislike very much, because it is based on superstition, is Black Magic. It has nothing to do with

genuine science on any plane, as it suggests to you wrong thought which is able to harm you, or even to make you ill if suggested to you or directed against you, during a period of weakness. No evil thought can harm you if your thought is strong. Paul says that there is only one power and that for good. It is bad policy to suggest illness to a person, but if that person is ill in consequence, then the physical and mental are wrong in him and he is weak in admitting the existence of ignorance. As for you or any of us, we are in wrong thought when we lack heart qualities that make us forgetful or inconsiderate of brother-man.

Still another cruel teaching is that poverty is error, and that people should band together in order to be prosperous. Christ has asked you what it would profit you to gain the whole world if you lost your own soul. You owe service, not to those who proclaim the same doctrines that you accept, but to every man, woman, and child whom you are in a position to help; and you owe the duty toward yourself, to the spirit which dwells in your body, and not to pampering the body with the result of riches. Poverty of mind may be called an error, but not poverty of material resources. Just as prayers without work are useless, do away with fanaticism. The science of right living is the science of understanding, therefore you must live in reason: you cannot safely deny anything that exists. Various diseases are in the world; deny them if you please, and you may smooth things over for a while; if the will of the individual be strong enough, and if it be God's will too, then cure may come. But all persons cannot be healed. And thank Heaven that

they cannot, for many of them are living failures, and will be better off in another field of operation, or at all events where they cannot interfere as much with others. If man were to live on for ever in the flesh, he would have to keep young mentally and forget to say, "I did so-and-so when I was young." Do it to-day.

A taste of life is like a taste of wine, delicious, exhilarating, fascinating; you are in the fields of discovery, and your object is to learn. Men make a grave mistake when they think that age prevents them from studying. A man of seventy is as ready as a man of forty to take a message, and often more ready — unless he has closed and spiked and riveted all the doors that let in light and knowledge. A woman thirty years ago was old at fifty; to-day she is still young at fifty; in another twenty years she will be fresh and girl-like at fifty, for you will discover the germ which induces physical age, and will succeed in treating it by a method of elimination. There is physical compensation with each age. Forget to count your years; remember that your birthday does not come once a twelvemonth, but on every day that brings you a new thought, since birth means the springing into existence of life. If you are going to count the birthdays of your spiritual existence you will be kept so busy that you will have time left for little else.

Medicine interested me immensely when I was on earth more than half a century ago, in a little Western town in America. Leeches and bleeding were still in vogue, and I had a firm faith in them, as the letting out of a little bad blood never does harm. I wish man could as easily

lose his lies and his desires for lust. There have been great discoveries since my time, which I have followed with interest; but I often see the old remedies still applied.

There is going to be a revolution in chemistry and in the uses of medicines. Many in your world are working at chemistry now, and, as I have told you, many on our spirit-plane are working at it too because of your need for it. You will discover that just as there are three parts to man, so there are three diseases, and three only. These are cancer, consumption, and rheumatism. All other supposed distinct diseases are varieties of these three.

Cancer is the greatest of all diseases, and is responsible for more deaths than any other; it is a foreign substance which affects either flesh, nerve-centers, or organs. Under the head of cancer, syphilis and ophthalmia are classed. Ophthalmia, the cause of blindness, is a specific germ communicated by the mother to the child at birth; she received it unconsciously through infection from the child's father, he having contracted the infection in licentious relations before or after marriage. Several to-day are busy verifying this, which was commonly taught in your world three thousands years ago. The same infection which blots out the eyes of the baby is responsible for all other conditions of invalidism. One man breaks into a bank and steals money; another, through immorality, ruins his own life and that of his children.

Consumption is the second of your diseases; it has many varieties, and has made a great many victims. Bright's Disease is a form of consumption.

Rheumatism is the third disease; it is a form of blood-

poisoning, caused by uric acid or poverty of blood. From rheumatism come nervous troubles, mental or bodily.

As for cancer, the sole treatment for it is by the cancer-germ, used in conjunction with serum. The treatment for all three diseases will be by serums, for by feeding life you produce life.

You will learn to understand more wisely the laws of food. Man can hardly eat too little. You would be surprised to know how little nourishment is really required; man can live on fruit, nuts, and water. Not that I advise him to do it; I am simply stating a fact. Meat will cease to be an article of food, and you will go back to more simple diets. Countries where meat is not the main article of food are less cruel; for flesh fills man with uric acid, and is responsible for two-thirds of the illness in your day. The poor man, with his simple fare, is living far better than the rich, if he would only understand it. Your long-course dinners are to your body what your school and college educational system is to your brain. You give too much for serious good to result; you think you are nourishing, but, instead, you are clogging. In your schools, knowledge of such elementary questions as spelling, reading, writing, and mathematics would suffice, when applied intelligently in conjunction with courses on such sciences as botany, chemistry, and biology. As for your physical diets, you would have to observe the laws of climate more than you do.

In any country you will note similarities of architecture, as each country responds to certain vibrations, and is influenced by climatic conditions. You could not live in straw houses either in Arctic snows or under the tropical

sun; you need protection from cold as from heat. It is with regret that we note national costumes, and, to a certain extent, national architecture, going out, and being replaced by nonsensical conventional notions, which not only destroy much art value, but are not appropriate—perhaps, not even safe. You were not made to dress, or eat, or live alike in all the regions of the world; but you follow the lead of the dominant nation of the hour, so as to be called progressive or fashionable, and to receive flattery. Be natural, and let Nature lead you by the voice of healthy desire to what is fitted for you. Do not think I pretend that appearances should be scorned; what I criticise is blind, unreasoned, snobbish imitation. Appearances are necessary; a man careless and unclean in dress is usually unclean in other habits. Man and woman should look their best, without worshipping clothes, but keeping their temple up. If clothes are worn in your country, then not only should you wear them, but keep them in good order.

Old lands are like old people, they should be laid aside and allowed to rest. Populations should move to and from this land or that, according to the use which has been made of it. But this would interfere with your supposed ownership. Much land has had millions of owners because it is in the physical, just as many spirits have had millions of physical houses. So in one case the spirit owns, and in the other, the physical. Yet you own nothing; you only think you do. You have only leased your land as you have leased your body; and if you are a poor tenant, you will break the windows, and live down in the kitchen, so as never to see the light of the upper stories.

In the very old times the elements were very much as

they still are on your earth, and man dug holes in the ground and covered them with tree-ends to protect himself from animals—not guns. When winter came, he moved south; and as summer came, he returned north. He always settled near water, for the early man was clean. They were clean in what they ate, too—fruits, nuts, leaves, berries, roots; nothing in the way of flesh. Not even the animals devoured each other; they devoured trees. Fishes only ate the very smallest of sea-life, and they were able to fly as well as swim.

You speak of prehistoric man, and give him a period some 7000 or 8000 B.C. Why, that is a very late period indeed, for man was then already on a somewhat spiritual plane; he had a God, he respected brotherhood, and his moral ideas were higher and cleaner than those of to-day, for they were based on the principle of creation. True, he did not have barbers and manicurists and English tailors; but, being truer to God, he did not have cancer and other ills to which you so-called civilised men are now heirs. He took his lessons straight from Nature, he put living before creed or dogma, his religion was a sense and not an organization, his code of honour was so generally accepted that those who transgressed were immediately punished by being smeared with honey and exposed to the ants to be devoured.

Man was very athletic and very light; he could run or walk many miles in a day without knowing the word "tired." A good old friend of mine, aged about fifty thousand years, tells me: "I think that the feeling of fatigue did not exist in my day on earth. I do not remember having ever been tired. Our lives were very active, and we worked —or, that is, we thought we worked"—and he laughed.

"Life under the trees, near cooling waters, was delicious in the extreme. We ate when we were hungry, and that sensation of hunger did not come often—only once in two or three days. But we drank a great deal of water, and the air was very free and pure, untainted by smoke."

I admit that a man could not run a factory on such principles, or do very much business. But men were not machines in those days, they did not feel the need of it. Besides, men's powers and passions were used for the purposes for which they were given; children were born because parents wished them to be born, and not because of accident, as in your day.

But man needed other experiences; he has wanted to see the world from north to south and from east to west, he has also wanted to investigate his real being; but he has got far away from it and from God in his thirst for knowledge, because he has lost the simplicity of the child, and has become arrogant.

The man who lived thousands of years ago did not differ from you. You think yourself more advanced than he, and you have a better understanding of more things; but if you have made more discoveries than he, you have forgotten how to be yourself and have become artificial. The lake-dwellers who lived in houses built on piles, and the mound-builders, and the men of the Stone and Bronze Ages, do not tell a story very different from yours. The differences consisted only in the lives they led, as told to you by the stories they carved upon stones or bones, or by the old frames of once-physical houses, as shown in the mummies Egypt and Greece have given up.

If you go back to prehistoric times you find certain

differences in structure: men were then extremely tall, often eleven or twelve feet high, and beasts were so large that deer were the size of elephants. We have many of those people and animals in our world; on the many spheres you may see Nature in all its forms, counterparts of what existed not thousands but millions of years ago, for eternity is everlasting. The only thing that has materially changed in the physical body of man is his development; but your race will become taller and larger than it now is. The coming generations will demonstrate this, because of more out-of-door sports; because of living nearer to Nature, as in olden times; because of love for air and exercise. To make full use of your faculties you must never grieve. Only happiness can give true insight into life. Do not mourn even when those you love are taken from you; God can take because He has given, but He takes away only the physical. He may have laid it low because a bigger service was offered over here. Furthermore, bereavement is the great leveller; regardless of science, or medicine, or philosophy, the man of flesh, whether king or pauper, must die. That which was flesh is soon decay, and gases and other forces of life complete the destruction of the physical house vacated by the spirit.

You lend assistance to decomposition by losing your tempers so frequently. People do not really want to be cross with one another, they just get into the habit of it; they ought to learn that it is much pleasanter to be agreeable. Continual outbursts of temper make our countenance grow dark, and we become disagreeable without wishing to. It is the same with crime. No one really wishes to become a criminal, but one misdeed leads to another if it is not

corrected; and so you let the bars down until you are caught and exposed before the world, and no one will continue to know you without being ashamed of you. That is where your schools might be organized so as to help you. Men do not need to be put in chains, they have been in mental chains long enough. They want friends who will stand by them and tell them a few of their mistakes. This would be better than the wrecking of a whole life.

Your prisons disturb us very much, for special reform is needed there. If you would find God, the real Father, full of love and tender sympathy, you would not fill your prisons with men sent to wear their lives away that the whims of cruel people may be satisfied. God is taking note of the tortures which you, in your selfishness and narrowness, inflict upon others. Be sure that you shall pay the penalty to the full.

I would that you could go with us and see your brothers chained, starved, cursed, kicked, deprived of air and light in many prisons. How you can dare to allow it surpasses the comprehension of any sane soul. We have no desire for revenge on this plane; but personally it does my heart good to see the fiends responsible for this brought to justice. You all take the situation much too calmly. Investigate, see for yourselves how your brothers are being treated, and rise up in arms to release them even if you pay for it with your physical life. If you sacrifice yourself in such a cause, you will earn another life better worth having.

To find dens of torture you will not have to go far. There are many countries in which men, women, and

children are being punished by the hands of human beasts. Would that there were a Christ among you who could turn these keepers into swine and rush them into the sea! You talk of the Middle Ages, but the sufferings and the crimes of to-day are much more serious, because you have light. Tear out of your hearts that awful passion, that insane desire for lust and blood and revenge. I address you all, and I voice the sentiments of every one who has passed through the valley of the shadow of so-called death when I say that, if you would enter into the kingdom of God which is within your own soul, you must learn to love. It is not difficult. I can understand that a lot of wild animals should rush at each other and tear each other; but you put wild animals to shame. If you would subdue your brother, love him; if he is insane, keep him from doing harm to others, but do not deprive him of air and food. Many innocent and healthy men have filled your prisons and insane asylums, put there by cruel hate or by foul covetousness. You can stop a man's actions, but not his thought, and justice will come to him and to you.

Any man capable of planning anything and carrying it through, though it be robbery or murder, shows that he had the ability to do great things, but misused that ability. Your prisons are filled with fine intellects, men who are not successes and yet should not be called failures, because they have at least thought and used their senses. And by condemning them to forced work and harsh treatment you do not change their attitude toward life, you only make them sink lower. You are taking much upon yourselves, you are compromising your future welfare and development

by your attitude towards criminality of all kinds. Your brother is none the less your brother after he has committed a crime. Crime is in the thought, not in the deed; and you yourself commit one against your spirit by not loving your Father's son. Do not brand him as a thief or murderer; educate him, give him tools to work with, help him to read his soul, exercise over him the power of love.

Prisons and homes for delinquent boys and girls should be worked on the plan of mutual service. Have the inmates earn their board and lodging; have them both make and keep their own laws; have classes in which trades are taught; put a premium on good behaviour and service.

Their trials should be by boy or girl judges and juries of boys or girls. If they are condemned, they should live in a community, be put on their honour, have laws devised by the best heads among them, have banks and all the equipments for a large village. This has been cleverly thought out by a man now living on your plane, and is established in America and in England.

But more humane treatment is needed for men and women in prisons, as well as for boys and girls. No man has ever been whipped into obedience; you may stop his actions, but his mind is still busy; and where treatment is cruel and unjust, the germ of revenge is at work. You do him no good, as his confinement has been the means for him to formulate more clever schemes against the time of his release. Practise the law of human kindness, and do not forget your relationship to brother-man, and that those who are suffering from crime-malady need you much

more than those who are healthy. Give them your love and sympathy, and plant in their breasts hope that will make men and women of them, and will help them to make men and women of others.

The conditions you impose are terrible enough in themselves when the victim has broken your earth-made laws. But how much more terrible are they when the victim is innocent, and has been condemned by mistake. Here is a story told me by one of my spirit-friends:—

Two young men were travelling in a country that was foreign to them when one fell heir to vast wealth through the death of a distant relative. He gave a dinner to celebrate the event; he and his friend spent a pleasant evening together; then he started off next day to claim his fortune, and his friend continued the trip alone. The friend, sad and lonely, left the city and wandered from place to place. Trying to forget the boy whom he missed, he fell into bad company, took to drinking and gambling, and led a very dissolute life. Then news came that the first young man—the heir to wealth—had been murdered under mysterious circumstances. Suspicion naturally fell on the friend, who was unable to prove his innocence because the life he had led made it impossible for him to remember his actions and give a clear account of himself. He was tried, and condemned, not to death, but to lifelong penal servitude. He passed many years in prison for a crime he had never committed; yet his life was not wasted, for he talked with God and with the spirit-friends who came to him in prison.

Years passed by. None took interest in him, none made

an effort to obtain his release, none stopped to believe his protestations of innocence, because it was known he had been dissolute, and therefore all evidence against him was accepted. He died in the flesh, still a prisoner, and found himself in the spirit, and before the boy for whose death he had suffered. The boy, distressed by the fate of his innocent friend, had tried to suggest repentance and confession to the real murderer, but had not had enough strength alone. The two friends, united in the spirit, tried together, and succeeded, not in causing repentance within the very corrupt man, but in putting others upon his track, so that he was detected and punished on earth for having wrecked not one life, but two. This was not vengeance, but mercy; for atonement in the flesh may obviate far longer expiation in the spirit.

According to your principles of capital punishment, you take a man who has failed in harmony on the earth-plane, and has caused the unhappiness of others, a man whom you think not fit to live in your world, and you rush him into eternity; you send him into our world, and you call that justice. Unless understanding has come to him, you do not change his condition. Perhaps he was only just beginning to understand your world, into which he had been sent for expression. God alone has the right to change his sphere. If the sins of his fathers have been visited upon him in giving him a discordant brain, and a gory conception of life, and a desire for human suffering,, then put him where he can do no further harm. But do not put him in chains: put him to work.

Crime, whether due to insanity or to premeditation, has the same result. By punishment you do not alter the

criminal's position, you do not restore him to the normal; you merely make him revengeful; you dig down deeper into his nature, and cause other deeds to germinate that need only a condition to be hatched.

What you need is a revolution within yourselves, to make you see the needs of brother-man. I hear men say, "This is an enlightened age: we are doing much better than we used to." So you are, but you still need more education of the right kind, and equal privileges for all, since you are children of one Father. The trouble with some of the bad brothers is that only one side of their education—the desire for material benefit—has been developed. It is for the more advanced among you to teach them that property cannot be theirs or yours, though you may earn or steal it, and keep it for a while.

Look at the huge piles to commemorate the lives of Pharaohs and Emperors, and see the vanity of those who gained mere wealth and power. They forced hordes of men to tell lies about them on piles of stone which will haunt them for ages. Remember that on this side you have conscious life: that all things are clear to you and to God.

There are specialists in crime and in vice, as in all other professions. One man would not rob a bank, but he would forge a cheque. Another man would not murder, but he would stand by and witness white slavery, or even be a buyer and seller of the victim, and think that what he does justifies the means. If you could look into the padded rooms of some of these girl-victims who are drugged and carried off, and subjected to ill-treatment that a dog would not be asked to endure! That is the greatest of all crimes,

and it must stop, as it offends God, and brings man and woman lower than beasts. I would have all of you who are in earnest investigate for yourselves, for you do not know how soon one of your own flesh may fall a victim to these slayers of liberty. These poor women, who were given no choice, are even more to be pitied than the girls who walk the streets; but these latter are also your sisters: they may need your help—they do not all sin from mere desire. They were all innocent at one time, but the germ of discord took root.

In Japan, rows of houses in a certain city are kept for girls, who are put into cages and sold by men at two entrances. In China, girl children have been sold or murdered in certain cities; while in Burmah, children are leased out for the benefit of their parents. Crime exists in every capital of the world. In almost every large city a traffic in human blood goes on in the way of girls' purity, while in Paris the business is on a legalised basis.

The white slave traffic means the importing of white victims into foreign countries where their language is not understood. Offices for this organized business are established in all the leading cities of the world, where plans are laid for the trapping of victims taken as cattle in huge markets, paying the procurer thousands of dollars for wrecking young lives. These poor victims from all parts of the world, are landed in China, in Siam, in India, and other quarters of the globe far less exotic from your Western point of view; they are placed in padded rooms where their screams cannot be heard, all their clothing is taken from them, they are sometimes even blinded or rendered dumb; they are defiled in the

vilest manner. Their lives do not endure for more than five years. This, my brother, is one of your works. Oh for the undoing of the villains who, for material gain, bring such children to destruction! But the victims are pure and undefiled before God, as before right-thinking man.

We do not see how you can remain quiet, without investigating such conditions of horror in your world. You do not even take thought for your insane asylums, where many victims are immured, some by the mistake of doctors, others by designing relatives, others yet who are not insane at all, but obsessed by unclean spirits. Where these last find weak conditions and overmuch thought spent in certain directions, they have no difficulty in taking momentary possession.

It is you, the self-called living, who are the real dead, as I have already told you. If you were alive, you would awake to such conditions and do something to remedy them. You would not allow brothers and sisters to suffer: your sympathies would be aroused, if nothing more, and you would have a moral revolution—the only revolution necessary to-day. All these wars and rumours of wars fade into insignificance compared to the really serious conditions to which you close your eyes, conditions that are impoverishing your souls and taking away your birthright. Remember the sins of omission: they are serious, my brother. You may be subjected to degrading and laborious work in the undoing.

These facts ought to show you that we, being quite aware of what is going on, are justified in thinking you need us to save you from your baser selves, and to make you see at least what your brothers and sisters are doing

in other parts of your world. If you do not need communion with God, then I do not know what you need. Do you know that each one of you is held guilty in the sight of God for permitting crime to exist and not making an effort to stop it? I say, Do away with messages from spirits who tell only of their own happiness in the midst of all this human torture, of this wandering of the spirit of man so far away from the spirit of truth. I hope you will not conclude, from my remark about happiness, that we are not happy as spirits. We are. But we are too deeply conscious of what is needed for the future welfare of your race, to talk of our own happiness if we know anything at all about real conditions among you.

Animals are far less cruel than you are. I would much sooner trust my daughter in the den of lions, or in a bed of serpents, because they would only separate the body from the soul, while you make the soul a prisoner in a body which is beautiful and should be full of light. I do not condemn the creatures I have told you about: may God help them and you to bring about the reform that is so urgently needed. Missionaries are needed on every plane—not missionaries with stereotyped religions, but missionaries with deeds in their hands and with human kindness and charity in their hearts. Paul has told you that without charity you are as nothing; but men of all times, whose reason has been seasoned with belief, have said it. You must get into touch with sublime Nature, you must live in the light of truth, you must recognise the full brotherhood of man, before you can evolve beyond the cult of flesh-senses which is the root of your present evils.

Let nations and governments rule to suit themselves.

Nothing matters except the harm being done to mankind by man himself. Kingdoms and republics have existed, and will continue to exist. That detail of form is important only so far as human justice is concerned. Do away with your political and religious contentions: they do not advance you.

All this crime of which I speak would not be so terrible if it affected only one man, or even men as units. But great nations are destroyed by the low rule of human passion.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

SIXTEENTH LETTER

Evolution, material and spiritual—The envelope race—Thinking powers among animals—Other forms of evolution—The story told by an aged stone—The development of spirit comes through effort and service—Cataclysms are a part of progress—This was realised by thousands who died together from a volcanic eruption—Soul evolution, or the continuity of lives, alone explains what is otherwise inexplicable.

AS I remarked in a previous letter that a cycle of deaths and births was essential for the growth of a planet, I also claim that a cycle of births and deaths is necessary for the evolution of man's soul through purification and instruction. Man has evolved into the man-soul from various forms of life, and he only became man as he recognized his oneness with God. The quickening of the spirit is the realising sense in its awakening, and that may come early, even before he has quite left off being an animal.

Darwin and others have had ideas of evolution that are right. We grow by very slow process, gaining point by point, and it takes millions of years to make any degree of advance. Thinkers must believe in evolution. If it is not so, then what have you to hold to? Something does not come out of nothing. The energy which manifests itself either in man or in beast, according to their progress, has always existed in one form or another, and always will exist. All progression is in the form of waves and cycles;

and evolution presupposes involution. The body returns to the earth and mingles with other earths. The soul seeks a higher plane and manifests itself in another way, with one of its other houses or atmospheres. It has been able to draw about it whatever form it takes, it is the result of thought brought about by combinations. The gross body performed the outside work for the soul, but severed itself from its finite body, and it will require a still finer receptacle for the mind to go on and perfect its work.

The soul may exist in some men at the very beginning, but ordinarily the soul comes when qualities are already developed. Where a man has only the germ of a soul, he is in what we know as the envelope condition, meaning that the soul is yet to be unfolded. At one time there was on earth a whole envelope-race. Some of your animals to-day have more soul than some of your two-leggers. If such men, who do not understand what the upright position means, were put down on all-fours where they belong, they would see themselves as we see them.

To reach the stage of man you have had to evolve through many other stages of life. The ape and the monkey, of which you speak slightingly, are comparatively much-advanced stages. You will find stones with markings which will prove to your satisfaction that people who lived on Rhea fifteen or twenty-five thousand years ago were able with their hands to do wonderful works in bronze. I have friends in the spirit, who came from the earth-plane, and whose age may be anywhere from a thousand to a hundred thousand years; they are youthful and alert, and speak of varied experiences from their life as you would speak of a book you had read or a town

you had seen. The Greeks, for instance, have taught me that the Parthenon—not the part you know above earth, but a lower part—was built fifteen thousand years ago, according to the religious rites of a period you can scarcely conceive. Since then the entire valley of Greece has changed, and so has much of the land bordering on the Mediterranean. The waters of the Nile have so altered their course that an Egyptian of the remote ages who returns now scarcely recognises anything. In India there used to be many water-courses, and abundant rain at frequent intervals throughout the year, so that the whole land was fertile.

At one period of development man cohabited with animals, producing a half-animal or all-animal race, according as the dominant element was man or animal. A curious, misshapen offspring would be the result. Men themselves were animals in those days, to prefer animals to their own kind. Some had tails and pointed ears, as represented in the fauns and satyrs of ancient art, which you term myths. Man has made wonderful progress since then.

You grow by thought, discovery, and experience. This eternal evolution has only one method, the cycles of births and deaths. Give us more births and many deaths, is the cry of the quickened spirit. Fear does not enter into the soul that knows God, and who realises the *I AM*. People show their lack of development in their selfishness, in their feeling of having a piece of land or a piece of God that no one else can have. That is such silly nonsense, such a waste of valuable time in trying for things that can never be yours, except in love and co-

operation with all other things in the world. Man's soul becomes evolved by the work he does in daily life. His understanding of duties towards others shows his evolution and his strength. All talk about a man being a man simply because he is in a man's body is nonsense, unless he has a semblance of man in his soul. The body cannot be the real man; the body comes and goes; it is the spirit that lives always. What does the identity or the individuality of the body matter? You do not live in the body, but in the spirit, and the spirit does not change except to become finer, and to gain fuller understanding; and it is towards this that each new expression in the continuity of lives helps you. The real evolution of man will be perfected when manifestations of mutual love come from all sides; when universal understanding and sympathy have been established; when the universe, which is one, is acknowledged and accepted as one.

But the soul of man must first, through the expression of spirit, reach the point where it can perceive itself. You cannot see yourself if your two eyes are shut, or if the eyes have not come. What look like eyes are not always eyes, only the semblance of eyes, because they look and do not see; and ears that do not hear are not ears; and a mouth out of which only violence comes is only the semblance of a mouth; and a nose that gets only the bad smells and loses the delicious odours is not a nose; and touch that touches only with the outside, dulled, physical senses does not touch. They are all only the semblances of such senses. They are like dark stars, with their lines which spectrum analysis would show if they had light; lacking light, they lack life at present, so that

we cannot see the lines; but the lines are there. The evolved man lives fully in all five of his physical senses, and many live in four others, too, even on earth, on the physical plane. But any man evolved to the point of appreciating even the first five senses does not sin: he knows better.

If you had understanding, you might even enjoy all the senses while exercising but one. You really need only two at most—taste and touch—to receive all the impressions you want; though, of course, it is as well to enjoy the others if you have them. In every sense there are seven senses; every part of your body will receive for you in any of the desired thoughts, if directed by thought. At this moment you have in your world a very wonderful woman, deprived of sight, hearing, and speech, and who has, nevertheless, learned to talk and use the sense of touch or feeling so as to convey to her brain the colours and tones which you obtain in other ways. The electro-magnetic forces of the universe connect all things, representing in themselves the positive and negative elements, or masculine and feminine. All the other laws which regulate the destiny of man are in them. On all spheres man and the universe are one, and a spiritual law must influence a physical law, because you cannot divide the forces of Nature.

You must realise that animals have as many outer senses as you have, with one sense much more developed in them, that of scent. Still, I may say that man also has that, but called by another name, as it has reached a higher degree of advancement where man responds to it. It is called intuition, and by it he senses conditions about

him, what he calls first impressions; and they are the only true ones, as they greet you spontaneously. Other impressions are given you, but they are made up of various conditions, suggested by your environment and that of your new friend; such impressions are regulated by man's ability to understand according to the evolution of his thinking soul. This sense cannot be confounded with the others, as it lies outside of your so-called five senses. It is a dangerous sense, however; it may cause the unevolved man great confusion, leading him to conclude unwisely and unjustly; condemning others merely because he himself has not known how to see in the proper light. Development is necessary not only for the body as expressed in manual labour, but for the soul to give it quickening power, so that it can rapidly and justly discern the true conditions about brother-man.

Growth may be very slow, but nothing is ever lost; you will progress always a little higher, with an increase of brain and a dawning of intellect. Outwardly you may be brought down from an exalted position, but nothing can change your spirit of progression: a thing learned is a thing remembered for all time.

The soul of man is infinite; your body is changing as the sea with the tides that come and go; you have not the same body that you had yesterday, for changes have occurred since then. Only your impressions make the body seem the same to you. If your body did not change continually, you would not be alive: death would have claimed you. But the dead body changes very rapidly once the fire has been extinguished in the boiler and the watchman has blown his last whistle. The material sub-

stance which responded in every part at the request of the soul has been laid aside, it must seek its own channel, as the soul which once inhabited it has outgrown its dimensions. It could not in its finer substances live on, when the natural body failed to perform its functions. Material returns to material in another form, and will serve again in due course: such is the economy of Nature. The sun shines on the fallen leaves, rain comes and sleet to cover them over, earth then plays its part; and presently what had been leaves decays, and becomes soil, or perhaps coal, for others to burn at a much later period. Precious stones, too, have their evolution, and pass through many stages before reaching perfection.

So we all evolve, and in our evolution carry on others with us. Those in our vicinity are always either benefited or hindered by our presence.

Immortality does not belong exclusively to man; all things follow evolution, over here as with you. Man, the most perfect in form of all animals, because he is built in the image of God, does not need to change outwardly: his evolution is inward. But dogs, cats, and other animals evolve much in form.

You would be surprised at the intellect of some of your animals. Horses, dogs, cows, pigs, and even chickens will prove to you that they have brains and reason, if you will teach them and help them to think. Not all of them are able to think yet; but some can, showing that they have evolved. Love and understanding can be developed by you in all animals which have not been hounded into fear of you. They have been known to do very wonderful things. Many animals understand the laws of

meditation, and often remain for a very long time thinking hard—animal thoughts, but thoughts.

One of my friends witnessed a remarkable incident in Japan. Fifty or a hundred crows were gathered together, talking and screaming very angrily. Finally one was dragged before them, and the mob flew at him and killed him. They all became silent as soon as he fell to the ground, and they whispered together as in awe. My friend drew near, and learned that the dead crow had been guilty of theft and murder; the crows had met to try him, they had judge and jury, his death was decreed, and a certain number were appointed to execute him.

A man who does not care for animals is only half a man; but do not be foolish about them. Too many of you are inclined to be faddists. You treat dogs or cats as if they were human beings, and yet you see suffering children about you, and let them suffer, instead of sharing with them the love you lavish on animals. Another mistake you make is trying to train animals too far. You may be hot-house plants, but you need not try to spread the disease. Cancer—the most loathsome of diseases—comes more often in houses of refinement, and is due to unnatural conditions. Any foreign substance can the more easily destroy you if you have weakened your being by too much artificial culture. Flowers and human beings do not differ greatly; if the soil about flowers becomes weak and watery, the flower fades and loses its colour: so does man lose his colour under like conditions, and his perfume, which is his inspiration.

Plants and trees have their evolution in colour, in perfume, in vigour, in fulness of foliage. But stones and minerals have also their evolution, their intelligence.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

A huge stone in Switzerland once told me his story. He said that three thousand years ago he formed most of the mountain-side, but avalanches had broken pieces of him away; then an earthquake came, scattering the ground and all the loose stones which protected him, and he was left alone. Nothing happened to him for many centuries, until one day a party of men saw him, thought him a good specimen, and decided to use him. Workmen came and carved great pieces from him, some very ruthlessly, tearing him asunder as if he had not taken thousands of years to form.

"But they were such children that I did not mind what they did in their ignorance," he went on to say. "Besides, I was going to see new countries. One part of me went into a house; another helped to build a church, and another became a monument over the grave of a very bad man who had no rest. He would come back and sit on me, and say, 'Oh, why did I die?' If I said anything—which I would do when I could stand it no longer—he would impatiently say, 'Keep quiet; what does a stone know about a man's feelings?' But he finally went away. I suppose he found his real self, and may visit me again when he thinks he has time.

"You see that tall tree there by the river-side? We are great friends; he has had several wonderful experiences of his own, and is now excited because a discovery is about to be made at his very roots. We all love, and all think of life on that higher plane where greater evolution takes place."

You all vary, each is trying his own way: so do not hinder your brother and keep him back. All rivers are

not oceans, and all hills are not mountains; but they enjoy the same privilege in the ether around them. The ancients chose the hills to worship God, believing that the higher up they got, the nearer they would be to Him. They were right in their thought for height, though not in regard to the hill. The highest comes from within; and man in his soul's attainment must reach the mountains.

Some men have stars in their foreheads to light the way; others, whose lights are in their feet, look down, and so cannot see the sun and the stars: their poor bodies are fast-rooted to earth. There are more really great men in your world to-day than there have been at any other time, because education has become more general; but many fear the narrow confines of public opinion, and may fear to shock the world because of possible disgrace or ostracism. If you have a divine inspiration, follow it; and if you write books that nobody reads on earth, continue to write them. If you have put your best thought, your best effort, your purest ambition into them, they will be understood over here, and will be counted for you. A great idea that is expressed never dies, even if it be but expressed in thought. Many of the earth's greatest souls have passed away unknown by you or disgraced among you, and come into honours here, as we do honour to greatness.

I hear the cry among you sometimes, "Oh, he knows too much to make a good living." That is all wrong. Knowledge and intelligence should not interfere with one's power to earn and save money. On the contrary, they should make a man realise the need when he sees great suffering about him. Education does not place any one

on a higher scale unless it gives something to think about to the man so fortunate as to have it. But then he must seek uses to be made of it; he knows that he owes it to others. So it is with money. In one respect as in the other, however, you must be without arrogance, which only causes you to be hated, and raises a wall between you and the persons you are anxious to help.

Nor must you, in greed for material gain, become fiends, as some men have done, and dig pits not only for yourselves but for others. The toll you claim from the world is sometimes so heavy that you provoke suicide and murders. There are lots of frauds among you, and lots of you are liars, and say with the lips things that the heart condemns. Some of your souls are buried so deep that several resurrections will be necessary to prove that you have one, or if it is only a semblance. There are witnesses all about you—even the air and the trees are telling tales. They are listening and they know you. Throw off your mantle of outside untruth and stand revealed. That is what evolution means—to be natural. Your soul needs support, your spirit needs quickening, and your body or tabernacle too, if it has reached that stage of advance: otherwise, it is only flesh as other animal flesh. It all needs the demonstration which will reveal the spirit in you. though the trials of existence be great, though storms rage on the sea of your life, all these are but accidents which can open the roads to events, just as the billow recedes before surging to its utmost height. Your outside world is seeking to adjust itself to the miracle of harmony and eternal love, and is, in fact, slowly finding its own right level. There may be convulsions or seeming

catastrophes, but these are only parts of progress, though they mean pain and cause great distress.

One of my spirit friends was ushered into the spirit world with thousands of others, after a terrible cataclysm of which there had been no real warning. For days they heard rumbling noises which they could not explain; the clouds hung low, and the air was close and smoky, but they thought it came from the sea whose shores they saw. Suddenly the noises increased in great volume, smoke and flames came from the mountain peak which rose above them, a rain of fire began to fall, and molten lava poured down in the direction of their town. They rushed towards the sea, but the torrent of fire was too swift for them and a multitude was burned. Heart-rending prayers were sent up for the safety of mother, husband, child.

"When, to my surprise, I saw my body lying before me, dead, and I stood there not dead, I could not account for it," my friend has told me. "Others surrounded me. We all looked on in a dazed sort of way, seeing an ethereal substance rise from the field of dying. It took us some moments to understand that we were alive, and then great rejoicings arose from those who had been weeping, praying, and suffering. The change had been so sudden and so complete that we were almost pained in our joy, screaming to one another that we lived—we lived! and asking if those dear to us lived also. We hoped they had not succeeded in reaching the sea, because then they would be deprived of the wonderful experience we were having.

"We had believed that we would not entirely die, but none of us had given serious thought to the subject;

we were not sure that immortality would be a pleasant gift, as it might cut us off from the sun and from friends who remained in bodies.

"Nature in all its forms ought to disillusion man as to the possibility of death. Evidences of the power of evolution are given on every hand. You do not see the spirit of the flower in the tiny seed, or the oak in the acorn, or in one man perhaps a great nation. No, that was not intended: truth or life cannot be reached until you dig deep.

"The full importance of our change did not come to us for some time. Then we realised that the earth needed its evolution, that harm was not done to us because an angry Father wished it; but that God is good, that experience was necessary for us, and also for the earth, grasses, rivers, rocks; that proper outlets must be found at times, and that God cannot stop His laws for our sakes. We happened to be in the way of this cataclysm, and so we suffered; but if we had been less dense we might have taken warning. Not that any one of us has ever regretted the experience.

"Several of those who died with me that day had lived on the planet Atlantis, and had had an even more dreadful experience there: they had realised for a long time that something was impending, they had the sense of falling, of being crushed, of all things about them changing form and going into space and being scattered wherever they happened to fall. The earth and the heavens themselves seemed to give way, to disintegrate. This was meant for a double purpose, to show that all things physical change form, but that all things spiritual retain their

individuality, and the only change that comes is of new truth acquired in many experiences devised in various ways."

Your spiritual body is aided by any culture you give your physical body or mind, as all helps to build or reconstruct your spiritual body. With every evolved thought you add something, and at the end of your earth-experience you have just what you have earned—nothing more. But if you look to the immediate reward, your work defeats itself. To serve people because they can serve you is of no importance whatever; you are safeguarding your interests and not theirs, you are using them as instruments to further your own schemes. Similarly, although, as I have told you, man ought not to have too many foods because he is like the plant which is spoiled by too many soils, yet those among you who are dieting in order to preserve your physical beauty or strength are not profiting yourselves spiritually. Yet, though you do it now for the sake of the physical, it will lead to better thoughts, and so you will eventually be profited spiritually. The most important spiritual growth comes from the sacrifice of the physical to a great cause. People who place themselves in danger for the service of their country, for instance, do so with a joy which takes from them all sense of fear. Many things can be gained only by blood; that was why Christ sacrificed Himself to the mob. His Father could have sent legions of angels to rescue Him, but then His message would not have been driven home, and His earth-life would have been a half-failure. The price demanded is Self: to evolve, you must give yourself up and endure any torture for the sake of spiritual gain, as evolution is death and birth.

When you deal with soul-evolution, you cannot limit

yourselves to the laws governing the evolution of matter, for spirit is on a higher plane. The survival of the fittest, adaptability to circumstances, and other physical laws, are combined with physical heredity or predispositions to rule your animal kingdom; and a race will grow or diminish in beauty or utility according as these laws are respected or violated. Yet while the spiritual includes the physical, you cannot get away from the physical itself when dealing with it.

As an example, take the laws that govern physical colour. The line of colour carries very far. The complexion of a man, his eyes, hair, skin, are coloured by one parent or the other, or may be carried over from a grandparent, or even farther back. This is true of plant life as of human life. A fern may be changed from a straight to a curling leaf, but it will revert to the straight if not continually attended to.

The soul may either return again and again to one plane to learn all that plane has to teach, or it may dwell successively on various planes, until all forms and manners of knowledge have been gained. Your earthly laws of evolution explain why the race-horse or the draught-horse is better to-day than ever before, or why a man may run or box or wrestle so well; but they cannot explan why Homer, who lived so many centuries ago, has never since been equalled in poetry. They cannot explain it, any more than accident or so-called materialism can explain it. The only explanation which resists serious, unprejudiced analysis is soul-evolution.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

SEVENTEENTH LETTER

The religious thoughts of the world—All early people worshipped God in Nature—The building-up of religion—How the eating of flesh passed from a rite to a greed—There are too many forms in the world's religious thought to-day—Understanding could be reached if it were desired—The religion of India—The burial of the dead, and why cremation is necessary—The religions of China, Japan, and Persia—Christ's message to the world—Reformers of the past and need for reform now—The Bible contains the truth if you would but see it.

THE Most High God, He who sends His workers and His disciples into various parts of the world preaching unity and freedom from the imprisoned self, teaches that only beyond the world of recognised senses do you see life and death. The world of things and of sense-pleasures passes away unless you have another world awaiting you, and a realisation of the absolute soul as connected with God the Absolute. The soul eventually goes back into its source (God) when it has completed its circle. God is not unknown; He is known to souls on all planes, when they gain the power to realise Him. His body, His soul, His mind, are demonstrated, each related to the other, but different in form—all God the Reality or the Universe. And we are the universe; we represent God, we are a demonstration from God. We all respond to His creating and destroying power to rebuild or revitalise us, His subjects; for the same power that destroys, creates. We all hear the voice of God calling from within and from

without, and so obtain thoughts which are not elusive, but real. Even things are real in this sense, since they are made to represent thought, and as such are expressed realities.

Souls in trying to give God's message became confused in early times, and complications took place. God has been called by many names, and has been many divine beings in His efforts to be Himself. Each man pictures his own God, and can see only the God he has made clear to himself; the degree of his relationship to the Divine depends on his degree of understanding. If he has a God-realisation within him, it will be made known by the fruits of his labours. Let your power to do things manifest itself, as it will set in motion the vibratory influences surrounding you; do not wait to be assured of success before you begin to try, for signs might fail you. You may see only the clouds which hang heavy and low just ahead of you, but to right or left they may be lifting already. Develop this faith in your own power, as you have faith in the work of God.

The idea of God has been changed to meet the minds of the people and of the Popes and priests of different ages. Though each man may thus make his own God, the God of the universe remains the impersonal-personal God.

The early people of all nations have worshipped God in Nature, and felt that man, original man, sprang from the earth. The sun was worshipped, first in fear and afterwards in love; then the moon, always with more or less suspicion; finally, the stars. The rainbow was considered a most marvellous thing, and all ran in fear and trembling from thunder and lightning. Fishes were among the

earliest forms of lower-Nature worship, because of their ability to live in the water and because their flesh was different from man's; then birds, then serpents, and other creeping things, again because they were different; then man himself. With the worship of man many evils entered in.

I am not now speaking of any country in particular, or even of any world in particular, but what I say applies to yours.

Man's understanding of his powers began with practising upon the things which surrounded him. Next came the effort to subdue other men. One boy would want to take away another's toys. Cliques would be formed: some would side with one, some with the other. Then came divisions between right and wrong: between power and pride. Man began to feel the force of concerted action: great hordes were formed to achieve victories. Hand-to-hand combats were a later development, which brought out much heroism. The principle in man was stirred, and while it had a hard time breaking through his thick hide, it did succeed in doing so. Then came the quickening of spirit, and spiritual birth occurred, and certain people who had sight, and consequently judgment, were chosen as leaders. A code of honour was gradually built up, and a system of exchange established. Clay, sand, and other materials were understood and put together in shapes—at first by accident, as all great discoveries are stumbled upon by accident after many have worked seemingly in vain.

All this came long after the Golden Age: when no evil existed on earth, when men were happy, and wars did not strike terror and death to the heart. Spirits had had no difficulty in doing their work in the flesh-garb then. And

in the Silver and Bronze Ages which had followed, there had been God-like men. But the age of the world or of individual men need not make much difference: each age supplied its opportunities, and often a very young soul does very great work, having found the light.

Men began to think, and to wonder what became of themselves after death. They considered birth wonderful, but were awed by death, which numbed and stifled their beings. They wanted to know what to do with their dead. They would put them in holes, or lay them in water, or stand them up against trees. But when the uses of clay were discovered, then vases were made to cover the body completely, so that if the man—the thought-man, of whom they had only a glimmering—should want to return, he might do so, and have a clay body to return to. This was especially true in Egypt.

Having evolved to the point of worshipping all things in Nature, man did not kill until killing was introduced by accident. A very wicked man was killed by lightning, and all thought this was intended by the god of thunder, so that he might not torment brother-man any more. There was a wonderful ceremony over his body; he was held up as a warning, and a great reform took place, whose effects lasted many years.

Then, killing being known, flesh came to be eaten. Babies were killed and eaten immediately after birth if the signs and portents were judged unfavourable. When man died, he was eaten, unless he was a chief; then all who had served him were killed and buried in a huge cone-shaped pile, with all the belongings of the chief, whose wife and children, except the eldest son, were buried alive.

According to the custom in vogue for eating the dead, each friend of the man ate a portion, with the idea that since they loved him, his flesh must not be lost. The result, I am told by my friends of that period, was frightful, numerous deaths resulting from the eating of dead flesh. It was then done in a spirit of pure love. Later it was done in greed, the man being cooked; but that came fully a thousand years later. And curious to say, as the race became more civilised, the desire for flesh increased. They stood in particular awe of animals, which appeared marvellous because different from man, as I have said; but they learned to eat animals, too, later.

Thus human and animal sacrifices to the gods of Nature were gradually introduced. A man of this period tells me that in his country men would carry about the heads and arms and feet of their enemies with them; singular decorations, made of human teeth, hair, finger and toe nails, were put about their places of residence. So souvenir collectors existed in those days. In all the churches were two sticks of wood, crossed, to show the two chief gods worshipped—the sun and the earth.

In another place, at a much later period, the powers of darkness were worshipped through fear. Black rams and ewes were offered in sacrifice, and great crowds of shades or spirits were supposed to be benefited by the sacrifice, and to use their efforts in behalf of man, so that he might be led to victory. In India to-day there is, in the city of Calcutta, a temple devoted to the revengeful goddess, Kali, who is satisfied by blood alone; lambs are butchered by the priest, and certain parts sold to be devoured by the masses. You will see multitudes of people at the feast, the place

reeking with the blood of the lamb or goat. The truth is that Kali was the Reproducer and Destroyer, but the ignorant among the sons of India did not get the real message, in that they sought to destroy life. What is meant by Kali is, that destruction is life, just as life is destruction.

The whole of the world has been impressed with the search for God, and each country has found its own pattern, the fundamental principle being for good at all times, but the form taken often leading to harm. A country is better off without any religion at all than with too much—I mean when it is overridden by ignorant priesthood. Man's actions depend upon the narrow confines of his belief, or upon the broad lines of his general life. More is needed than to chant the name of God.

Why do you need so many forms to express your ideas? A handful of people will gather together here, and another handful there, and each handful thinks it holds the only formula for salvation. But a religion which teaches that one man is better than another is no religion; and a country which holds its people in fear and superstition will fall, as its foundation is on sand. God is no more your father than the father of others, and harmony cannot be obtained until class distinction has been removed, and all brothers enjoy the same privileges before God. Can you possibly be happy, feeling that all your brothers are wrong? I can tell you that for God there are no creeds, dogmas, or 'isms; the Moslem, the Indian, the Hebrew are His children as much as the Christian, and therefore they are your brothers and mine. There are no special places for any of them unless earned by hard, individual service.

Condition comes by merit: God has no favourites—we all work shoulder to shoulder. The development of civilisation and of human society must be regenerated with fresh life and fresh ideas, based on love and fellowship. The improvident, lazy brother must disappear before general advancement can come. Your present system only takes the heart out of man, leaving him dry crumbs. If you would have peace and plenty in your ranks, you must free yourselves from the narrow spirit of your day.

Religion is not for one world, it is for all worlds; do not hold to theories, hold to God. Most of your religions are dependent on mythology; so you have sought for centuries to surround truth in mystery, and are succeeding in doing it, instead of realising, of finding, self, which means finding God.

If each country has its own conception of God, and if He does not seem to take the same form to all His children, it is because they clothe Him in the attributes which they best understand. But the attributes of God are all the attributes of men: and these come to the surface in you as you understand their laws in relation to yourself and to your Father, God.

The different conceptions of these great questions by men have given rise to your various creeds, but do not excuse your blind or sometimes wilful misunderstanding of one another. You are principally divided between East and West; the people of the West do not understand the religions of the East, but the East itself is somewhat responsible for this, since its own religion has often been misinterpreted and misapplied within its borders. For instance, Brahma was the embodiment of all that was

pure and meant growth: he was the god of Love, the father and mother. But this thought became confused by the enthusiasm of followers introducing too much other thought. Then, instead of calling its sects by different names, as the West does, the East has created many gods, so that some castes worship some gods, and others worship other gods. Yet the intelligent people of the East recognise but one great force—the Father God—who exists in all things, in the spirit of the tree and of the flower, as well as in us. And all ages have produced men sent from God with messages of salvation—Brahma, Buddha, Elias, Jesus.

Buddha made laws for India, and chief among them was that all men were created equal; that there was but one God, one Father, and no such thing as caste distinction. But Buddha's laws have been corrupted; and many other laws, and other gods, too, have been added. That country, rich in intellect and rare in its spirit of obedience, is divided against itself, because the love they feel for one another is not expressed. Yet their condition is no more confused than that of the West. You all want to do right, but you want your way of doing it, instead of getting together and holding a reunion to discuss facts.

Buddha's life is not unlike that of Christ, even in that his teachings have not been accepted to any great extent by his own people, but have found lodgment in various other countries; but Buddhism has been confused with other religions, and mutilated beyond any semblance of the pure teachings of Buddha, who stood, like Paul, for universalism. Also think of Buddha in connection with Luther, as being subjected to the tyranny of priesthood. But Buddha's

thought of life as being sadness is all wrong: life is beautiful and joyful. Asceticism, as practised in various countries, is not necessary for man's enlightenment. Fakirs think they find God by afflicting their bodies in many ways: some by looking at the sun, others by standing on one foot until they have lost the use of other members of their body. While doing this they preach to the multitudes: they are often ignorant men, but think they have found God by the contemplation of Nature and the mortification of the flesh; sometimes they close one hand, and hold it so until the nails grow into the flesh. They have schooled themselves to feel no physical pain. But physical bodies were not made to be deformed. Deforming the body need not, however, do harm spiritually, if the motive be truly spiritual; only often it is not. This is no more necessary for losing the lower element in a man than it is necessary to become a monk. Passion is a divine spark when influenced by holy love: it is the law of creation.

The impersonal-personal God—the I AM THAT I AM—is no respecter of persons; as the heaven you realise is the heaven you are ready for; as it is a condition, and depends on what you have made within yourself. Gautama Buddha, who renounced all his wealth, leaving his wife and child, to preach to the world, recognised all classes as sons of God; he may also be likened to Pythagoras, who claimed to remember his past incarnations, and would tell his disciples stories of his life on other planes: these two were among the first to remember. That ability is not common, nor is it necessary. Sufficient is it to be in the life you are living; and if you do happen to remember lives, it is unnecessary to talk about them.

THE MEETING OF THE SPHERES

Out of India many wonderful prophets and teachers have come, giving splendid messages. Among the teachers is Kershub Chunder Sens, who became identified with the Brahmo Somaji, a movement for harmony and equality, not only among all castes, but all religions and all races. His message was a direct message in God's realisation, because he understood the needs of his people. Also Swamiji Vivekananda, who had the advantage of travelling in various countries, carried his understanding of God with him. He realised that mere life in the five senses of the material world was but one demonstration of God's power, and that life on other planes was possible. There is to-day no prophet there of great importance; but many are going far in religious thought and science. A woman from the West, who still spends much of her time in India, has done much to make the world acquainted with the philosophies and religions of India.

The Indians are really a very wonderful people; and in the last ten years they have made remarkable advance in the generalising of education. It takes but ten years for a man to educate himself; so, give India ten years more and the entire spirit of the country will be changed. They have not only schools, but hospitals, insane asylums, and varied industries, managed by Indians for Indians, showing that they are a progressive people. The English are also doing much for India. What I wish to explain is that the Indians are not only being helped, but are helping themselves, and have already proved themselves competent. What they are still most in need of is to get rid of their castes. In the beginning there were but four castes, representing the division of their god into head, arms,

trunk, and feet. But since then there have been many more caste divisions. All this distinction must be levelled if they are going to live in the light of day. Under their laws, men and women of all sorts bathe and pray in the waters of the Ganges; the old wait on the shores for death to come, and relatives sit by, chatting, ready to burn them after death. They realise the unimportance of the body once the spirit has left it. By bathing in the waters they express the symbol of purity which St. John taught; and by mingling without regard to caste, they show that they recognise no distinctions in the presence of God.

The Parsees, who migrated to India from Persia many hundreds of years ago, give their dead to be eaten by the vultures. The economy of Nature is part of their religion, so they think even the body should be eaten. Those who die outside of the rules of their Church are not given to the sacred vultures within the temple, but are laid in another place. This corresponds to excommunication and prohibition from burial in sacred ground. In their funerals, a dog must always precede the corpse to the Tower of Silence.

In their disposal of the dead they have not advanced as far as the Indians, who practise cremation. Cremation is the proper way for disposing of physical houses which have served their purpose. Not only is it more hygienic than burial—which latter problem becomes serious in large cities—but it has the utmost importance from the point of view of the spirit.

As you will have read in previous remarks of mine, and also in remarks of other spirits I have quoted in messages, the body which has just been left exercises a species of

fascination, though for a short time, on even well-evolved spirits. We are most of us drawn back to the room where the body is exposed, and where those who were dear to us mourn; and we attend our own funerals with great interest. After the funeral, when the body is committed to earth, a spirit which has attained any degree of development goes on his way, leaving the flesh-house to the processes of Nature. But where the spirit has not advanced, the continued existence of that body may further retard the advance. On some spirits, the hold of the flesh is so strong, that so long as a single vestige of body remains in the grave the spirit will linger near it. This is the origin of the beliefs, which many of you term superstitions, about cemeteries being haunted. The stories brought away from them by ignorant people who have been frightened by a moonbeam are nonsense, but there is much more which might be told. Whenever I go, for the sake of friends in the flesh, to a cemetery for a funeral, I meet many of these poor unevolved spirits unable to tear themselves away from their tombs; I then either try to enlighten them myself, or send other spirits to teach them what they ought to know. I remember one case of a spirit who had remained near his body's grave for more than a hundred and fifty years; a small portion of his flesh had remained intact, and so long as it was there he could not draw himself away from its fascination. For several years I kept visiting him continually, before I was able to make him understand. Such spirits are found very frequently in certain of your countries to-day, where the ideas and tastes of men and women are very material, and where the prevailing religion surrounds funerals with much

pomp and show, making of the corpse almost an object of worship. The worship of the dead body by those who loved the spirit once in it may retard not only the unevolved soul, but even the highly evolved soul, since the power of love is very great.

I know of one case, a boy who had a beautiful soul in a physical body which was marvellously beautiful. His death caused such grief that the father could not renounce the contemplation of that angel-face, and so had the boy embalmed and placed in a special vault in the cemetery, to which he would go every day without fail in order to look through the glass window which had been left in the coffin-lid. Now, this boy was ready to go on; though his earth-life had been a short one, he had so lived it that he had won advancement, and his soul was already highly evolved before he entered that body. But daily he was drawn back to his body while his earth-father worshipped his earth-face. The boy would stand there weeping, calling out to the father to stop that awful practice, and go away; but the father could not hear. The father caused several years of misery to himself and to the boy-soul. Then, fortunately, the face began to change colour, and the father consented to the burial of the casket. Then, and then only, was the spirit of the boy left free.

I understand your feeling of respect for the flesh-house of those whom you have loved; and also, from the strictly material point of view, I understand the sentiment of "earth to earth." But I understand also the "dust to ashes." Remember that it is not a question of your sentiments alone, or of your earth-laws alone.

The Japanese show enlightenment in their attitude to-

wards the dead. Their ancestor-worship is not at all what Western nations suppose it to be. They do not worship their ancestors as their ancestors, or their dead as their dead. The ancestors of others mean as much to them as their own. Only, they feel that any person who has died has gained, from the fact of dying, information which they lack, and so reverence is due to something higher—as to all higher things. They bring into their daily life the spirits of their ancestors, who, they believe, are conscious of what they are doing: and they are.

The Japanese observe Shintoism as their national religion, and they largely abide by it, combining it to a certain extent with Buddhism; various Christian Churches have also taken a certain hold among them.

The Chinese have never been stirred deeply by religion; their thoughts turn to art and philosophy, which come very near to being religions for them. They never cared much about gods, but they cared so much for education that they would often kill themselves if they failed in an examination. They had Buddha as a god; and they sometimes worship Confucius to-day as though he had been a god, though he never was, any more than Plato was. But their sentiment in this matter is far from being strong, like that of Indians or Persians.

Their temples show the true greatness of the Chinese, a people who have not built on earth for all time, and have been content with buildings of wood beautifully carved by hand and coloured. The tombs of their Emperors are very simple, and placed on a hillside reached by numerous steps; the roadway on either side is protected by carved animals, horses, elephants, dogs, and nearer the tombs by

statues of priests and soldiers. The Emperor is buried with all of his personal possessions, and all that was of value to him. Until comparatively recent years their wives were buried alive with them, but now effigies are buried instead. It ought to be remembered that Chinese women used to consider it the greatest of honours to be buried with their husbands, just as Indian women were honoured to be burned on the husband's funeral pyre. But no one has the right to stop the physical life of another, and those who made such sacrifices have had to recognise their error after coming over here. It is, consequently, well that the custom has stopped.

The Chinese still have a curious idea in regard to the burying of their dead. They believe that they are led by the spirit, and they frequently make the burial in the street, or on the premises of other people; and they believe that such ground is rendered sacred. A person living in China may any morning open his front door and find a burial casket on his verandah; it would be profanation to touch it, and it must remain there, though the house become uninhabitable in consequence. The better-educated Chinese are, however, trying to do away with this custom.

As one goes through China, one sees very many funeral mounds in all directions; most often there is the high mound over the father, then the lower mound over the mother, and all round the smaller mounds of the children. These mounds are similar to the larger ones found in America, in which also chiefs were put with their possessions. This is because the American Indians are descended from Chinese who had migrated thither over the Behring Straits, and intermarried with the aboriginal American race.

The Persians have a splendid philosophy of life, which is being demonstrated by the Persian prophet of your day in trying to bring the East and the West together. He realises that as the sun rises in the East so knowledge is given there first, and its setting in the West is symbolical of the fact that the West has and holds the ideas of those people, differing only outwardly.

Each of these countries feels that it is in the right; and in a way they all are, the result being the same finally. When these people come over in the spirit, they look back upon the peculiar customs of their country, and know that each mode shows either the complications or the simplicity of the nature to which it belonged. The Egyptian dead often go back to visit the mummy-cases which were built over their bodies so that their spirits might have a house to return to on earth. They know, of course, that such a precaution as this was useless. The Egyptians were a people of great personal dignity, and they resent the silly crowds which go and gape idly in front of their mummies or cases in museums. They would not object to being studied from an artistic or historical point of view; they object to find their erstwhile flesh-houses surrounded by people who do not understand.

Some parts of the world refuse to yield now, as they have yielded much in the past. Greece may not produce all types of vegetation, but it is good soil for man's mind—it produces Platos. It is because of its soil that the East has given so many spiritual messages. I admit that there has been great corruption and strife in the East; and this will become even more marked when more commercial influences have been brought in from Europe and America. Man will have

to adjust himself; he may then have fewer gods, but he will be nearer to an understanding of himself. But when God no longer exists in a country, that country is indeed in a bad way; you must worship something outside of yourself—a higher being. The whole of the Bible is against the worship of idols, but idols can take many forms: the worship of your body, or of your family, or anything that pertains to the "mine." The morals of Eastern countries are low, but never so low as in Europe, where morals and God do not exist, where men live for to-day and die like beasts to-morrow. Hothouse plants with the real substances of God removed—that is what you are coming to, I sometimes fear.

Oh for more real spirit, the quickening of the spirit, the real man, the God in you to be given birth! You would have less time to think of yourself, but the suns and the planets would fill you with assurances of the splendours of God's works. Oh for a return of sun-worship, or of anything that has God in it, without form or creed to say that God is a jealous God ordering you to do His way or be damned! There are no creeds in your Bible commanded by God or by any of the prophets. You are all children of God, regardless of planet, country, form, or colour. Environment causes certain conditions in the earth-world, but this is limited to the earth; and not even those limitations will exist if you will seek to be mutually helpful.

Christ came as our brother from His Father, God, giving His Father's message. He was a man who lived among us, showing by His thought and actions the principles He stood for. He was the greatest of the revolutionaries of His or any other age: tearing the veil of conceit

and oppression from the eyes of men; giving a message, not for a few years, but for all time; having knowledge gained from His Father, God, even before the foundations of the earth; having lived and having been conscious of life in all forms. There have been many prophets and many saviours in various parts of your world: men who came with wisdom gained by experience, and who preached this brotherhood, this unity of love.

Since the day of Christ, religious reform has come into Europe, making itself felt in different countries at about the same time; such reforms have taken place at different periods throughout the world, and for the sake of different religions. Your so-called Reformation was rendered brilliant by such men as Savonarola, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Coligny, and the other splendid Huguenot leaders. Henvy VIII. was responsible for the Reformation of England, though he did not think of reform, and was brought to revolt through his selfish desires when the very powers he had followed for years became oppressive. Nearer to your own times, you have had Swedenborg. But the intolerant man has always done much to repress the growth and freedom of other men's religions, and scientific thoughts too. No one has the right to interfere with the rights of others, as such interference means stifling growth. Freedom must be allowed, and only limited when direct harm is done to others. The Pythian oracle and Jeanne d'Arc were psychics of extraordinary order. Both were young girls, inspired with a God-fearing message. The first advised the leader of a great army to victory, and gave very definite advices, not speaking in riddles which would read either way, as some alleged historians would

pretend she always did. The other led an army in person. Jeanne d'Arc, like so many who have dared to be different from others, paid the price of physical life. She—or he—had this message from God, and was sent for that purpose, having in a former life learned military tactics.

Jesus sought knowledge in many countries, notably by his talks with Indian philosophers, and priests in Persia and Egypt. Read your Bible—you have it all before you. But do not read it with preconceived ideas, read it in the light of reason. Free yourselves from Jewish superstitions and from their thoughts of fear and vengeance. Remember the times in which the Bible was written, and that much of it was influenced by men who sought their own material gain. But under such coverings the message strikes clear and clean. The Rabbis tried to corner God; but Jesus, the Son, came and opened the way to understanding.

Your Churches are evidence of a belief in our spiritual world. All in their creed speak of the Communion of Saints. If saints, why not your brothers and sisters? The world was not made for one man, or for a one-sided expression of life. The division of the Churches shows that dissatisfaction is working in the minds of men; and this spiritual intercourse which I ask you to make your own is within the reach of all. There is no creed or dogma in heaven: heaven is for all men. Ether is not for the benefit of a chosen few; no more is heaven, the heaven which Jesus said was within us, which will give you joy and understanding and communion with God.

The whole true science of earthly as well as spiritual laws might be expressed in one word—Love: L for Light, O for Omniscience, V for Vision, E for Evolution.

More love is what you need to make you see the light. Christ realised this; and you can realise it, too, by reading your Bible. No man requires another man to teach him the meaning of God's word. The worst trouble has come from ignorant explanations of the Bible by paid priests and ministers who have considered only their carnal selves, and who, instead of drawing you nearer together, have forced you farther apart.

God came to the world in the demonstration of the flesh as Christ, His Son—our brother—to teach us the wonderful love that passes all understanding. God is indeed love. Churches are needed where they teach brotherly love, where they tell you that harmony in all things must exist, and where the priestly robe is worn in the true name of God. But countries that are taught by a selfish code of priesthood fall, must fall, as right always survives.

EIGHTEENTH LETTER

The Bible's testimony as to the communion of spirits—Faith and prayer.

THE Bible is filled with instances of the angel of God talking with man.

In the beginning of creation God said (Genesis, i. 26): "Let us make man in our image"—not in *my* image, in *our* image—"and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air." Verse 27: "Male and female created he them." Chap. ii. verse 25: "They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed." Chap. v. verse 2: "Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created," showing that God made man and woman equals.

Abram had frequent talks with God, and God told him that Sarai his wife would be given a child in her old age. Abram laughed, and said that such a thing was not possible. But God's word was established, and Isaac was born. When the Lord was better pleased with Abram and Sarai, He changed their names. Abraham entertained the three angels; they talked about the important things of his time. Lot had his talks with the angels of the Lord about conditions, and when the multitude demanded of Lot to bring forth the men, he told them they might have his daughters, but to spare the men.

Isaac had many visions, being the second corner-stone, and from out of Isaac Jacob came.

Jacob, whose vision of the ladder revealed to him the spheres of heaven, had special physical forces, as he wrestled with the angel.

Joseph, the mighty seer and preserver of his time, was the man with vision of heaven and of earth. Jacob recognised the attributes of Joseph when he gave him his coat of many colours, showing his many virtues. It was Joseph's power of vision and understanding that caused Pharaoh to put him above all men in Egypt, and so enabled him to save his brethren and the children of Israel. Joseph was the practical dreamer of dreams.

Moses, the great law-giver, talked face to face with God, getting from Him the rules for life which became laws. He also came in touch with Pharaoh, but not the sort that Joseph knew: a Pharaoh who would not share his power, and who pressed on the children of Israel. When Moses asked the voice in whose name he must give the message about saving the children of Israel, God said, "Say unto them that I AM THAT I AM hath sent me unto you." God revealed Himself to Moses by many names. Moses discussed vital questions with the angels of the Lord; in one of the direct messages to Moses, God said, "I will send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into a place which I have prepared for thee." This shows that a guide was sent specially to him. Moses was given an understanding of attributes; he was told to number the souls of his time; the colours, stones, and stuffs employed are mentioned in a way to show their special importance. Moses talked

to God as a friend—face to face. He did not believe in wizards, or those with familiar spirits; yet he did believe in those with the gifts of the Spirit. They had customs in that day which would seem strange to you now. To touch the body of a dead person was to be defiled; or for a man with a blemish to offer a sacrifice was accounted wrong. They at that time realised that a blemish was due to wrong thought on the part of some one, and that a high example must be set.

I have said that Moses did not disapprove of spirits. Numbers, xi. 25: "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him (Moses), and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease." Also the spirit of prophecy rested upon two men that were in the camp. Verse 27: "And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp." Verse 28: "And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them." Verse 29: "And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them."

It was the ignorant use of the gift that Moses opposed, for then, as to-day, much harm could come in consequence. You will find a curious statement pointing out the difference. Numbers, xii. 4: "And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out." Verse 6: "And

he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Verse 7: "My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house." Verse 8: "With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches."

By this, the Lord made them understand that Moses was of a higher grade; as Aaron and Miriam had spoken against Moses, so, with a direct voice, he reproved them. Yet Aaron was also chosen by the Lord, as was testified by the rod which budded and bloomed, and yielded forth almonds.

The ass that Balaam was beating saw the angel of the Lord, so the Lord opened its mouth to reprove Balaam. Balaam had powers which he did not always use for high purposes.

Joshua, another of the prophets, was a great general, but he got God's message badly mixed when he understood that he must kill so many of God's people. He also flattered himself that God stopped the sun for his sake, which showed no small amount of conceit. Joshua did understand, however, that the stones had intelligence when he called upon them to bear witness.

Among the women in power in Israel were Deborah, who judged Israel; and Jael, who killed Sisera.

An angel of the Lord came and sat under an oak-tree to converse with Gideon, to whom physical demonstrations were given by the Lord in addition to messages.

Samson was an old soul who came into the flesh; his long hair was symbolical of his strength, as was Samuel's. Samson was a prophet, who had messages from the angel of

the Lord. Samuel was not only a prophet, but the king-maker of his time; he also judged Israel, and after his death, Saul, the man whom he had anointed king, attempted to communicate with him, first by the Urim and by the prophets; failing, he demanded of his servant to find him a woman with a familiar spirit. He went to the woman of Endor; she feared him, but gave the word from Samuel after being assured that no harm could come to her. He was not told pleasant news, as he had not been faithful, and the Lord had departed from him.

Elijah was a soul that had lived many times; he also talked with God and was given material aid, being fed by the ravens. Elisha's power also extended in many directions; he raised the widow's son from the dead, and made the axe-head to swim—showing remarkable power, as metals are very hard to move.

Isaiah prophesied the coming of Christ the Saviour, speaking of Him as the Branch, and then calling Him by name: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name, Emmanuel." He speaks of the words of Christ, and calls Him the Prince of Peace, and that the increase of His government shall know no end, and the spirit of understanding shall rest upon Him. He also understood that Christ, the man to come, had been a precious corner-stone: one with the Father, before the earth was founded. Isaiah's visions were mighty visions, having to do with peoples and nations; he prophesied the fall of many Nations, and also talked of the coming of John the Baptist to earth to prepare the way of the Lord; he told of the suffering of Christ, and of His purity and meekness.

Jeremiah was also a soul known unto the Lord, before he came out of the womb. Jer. i. 5: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations," showing that the Lord knew the work Jeremiah was to do, having known him before. He was a counsellor of the national affairs of his time: and spoke of the coming of Christ, calling Him the Branch. He also complains of lying prophets, who prophesy for their own gain, not unlike many of the present day.

Ezekiel is another of the great prophets: he had a marvellous vision of the heavens and attributes, seeing the wheels of progress. He said much about the moral conditions of his day, seeking ever to better those about him.

Daniel was a man of supreme gifts, and he was brought before the king to demonstrate his gifts; he did this in a way very similar to Joseph, like whom he was also honoured. He read the handwriting on the wall; he met with much jealousy, but was saved by the grace of God, who realised his great faith and the purity of his being. He had a vision of the four beasts, which he understood—the Lion of Mark, the Eagle of John, the Ox of Luke, and the Man of Matthew.

In Joel, the Lord God says that He will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh: "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions"—showing that this gift was not confined to a few.

Zechariah had talks with God, and the angel of the Lord told him of the Branch—meaning Christ, saying that the Branch meant Brotherhood.

In Malachi, John is promised as the messenger who is to prepare the way of Christ. The Lord speaks of Elijah's coming—meaning John.

Christ was always thinking of fellowship and harmony. "My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God and do it." Christ says: "Father, I have glorified Thee on earth, and have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I can do no more." He realised that He had given His message of love and harmony, and likewise had demonstrated the immortality of the soul.

Christ says (John, xvii. 24, 25): "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." Showing that Christ realised His previous life, and that His disciples knew He was sent from God to give His message.

In the Acts (ii. 4) the Spirit of the Holy Ghost descended upon them, and they "began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." The unbelievers accused them of drink. Peter tells them that this is what the prophet Joel speaks of in the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The voice of Jesus called Saul and asked him why he persecuted Him, telling him it was hard for him to kick against the pricks. Paul understood, and gives us a wonderful understanding of Jesus; he has a clear, legal mind, and when he is told what to do, he does it fearlessly. The voice of the Lord was heard by the men who were with Paul.

Paul had great powers, which he used intelligently, giving help to all those whom he reached, and helping the world to understand the Bible. Paul speaks with the Lord, who tells him not to fear, but to speak out and not to hold his peace. Paul's power was such that he healed by articles that he had handled, such as aprons and handkerchiefs. He succeeded in ridding himself of the evil spirit, and finding himself in his true power.

There is nothing finer in a literary sense than the remarkable defence of himself which Paul made. He tells of his life, of his conversion, of the voice of Jesus speaking with him. Paul says (Romans, xiii. 1): "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." Since all powers come from God, and there is no evil save in thought, all powers are good.

Paul says that we must know we are the temples of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us. He speaks of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. xii.), and says that there are many, and that he would not have you ignorant of these gifts. There are many gifts, but by the same Spirit. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. Verses 8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues." He says that the spirit of prophecy is the best of all gifts, as it helps and comforts us. He also says that the spirits of

the prophets are subject to the prophets, showing that the psychics or mediums must have wills of their own, and must never reach the point where they can no longer judge for themselves. Spirits come to help you, and to help themselves by helping.

Paul says that he dies daily. So we all do, as often as the thought changes; but birth comes just as often. He speaks of bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial, the same as physical-ethereal and spiritual-ethereal. The first man Adam was made a living soul. The last man Adam was a quickening spirit. When knowledge comes, your spirit is quickened, and by death. He also says, "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but shall all be changed." This shows the spiritual body or real body, the vase or living soul. Paul also says that if the earthly homes of our tabernacle were dissolved, you have a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. "For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is in heaven." Showing that in the flesh there is groaning, illness; but the spirit-house, with its God-quality, is different. He further says, "If so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked," showing that he felt the importance of building your spirit an ethereal house by good deeds.

Paul had perfect faith in life beyond the physical house, as he says he is competent and willing to be absent from the body, to be present with the Lord. He also says that "wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted by Him." Making clear that Paul knew that work alone could give merit. Paul loved his brethren, he wanted harmony, he wanted men to understand the

rights of others, he wanted freedom and peace; he says that "as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." He speaks several times of brotherly love and harmony.

The teachings of Christ and His disciples have always been for union, love, harmony, justice, and charity towards all. The Revelations are filled with messages that are not of your world, as all is represented in the attribute form. The seals mean lives; the general meaning of other attributes has been already explained to you to the best of my ability.

The prophets and all the noble men of both the Old and the New Testaments are living to-day, expressing in larger worlds their message. Yet their divine influence is ever with you; and they had and still have much to tell you of your world. It was not because they needed you, but because you have needed and still need their help towards Harmony, towards yourself, and towards God.

Faith is the substance of prayer; Faith is the substance of all things, and with Faith nothing is impossible. When you read the Epistle to the Hebrews you have proof of what Faith has done.

Chapter xi. 7-11: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of

promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." Verse 17: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son."

By faith men have been healed, and the whole condition of their life changed. Prayers without faith are fruitless, as are prayers without good works. Pray with an earnest, believing mind, and your faith will reward you.

Real prayers are obtained by shutting out all outer thought, by concentration which leads to meditation and causes mental vibrations that send your wishes out and cause your words to become alive. Prayers should go on without ceasing; all life is prayer, as prayers are the earnest thoughts that come from the heart, if you express all that is just and fine in you. A man prays as he thinks, and if he is selfish his prayers will be selfish. But if he loves God and realises the brotherhood of man, his prayers will be for all. You cannot expect a selfish prayer to be answered, any more than you would expect a good spirit to work for your betterment to the destruction of another. All God-expressed words are living words, they are as coals of fire, and the spirit of them is carried into the highest heaven. Your Bible tells you of the power of prayer, but your whole heart gives you evidence of it. Man's thoughts regulate his life, and his prayers are God-

expressed thought, which brings about a closer relationship with the God of all men.

The position you take to pray in is not the important thing. There is no form with God. In prayer you pour out the secrets of your heart, you tell God your hopes and fears: perhaps what a failure you have been, and what you hope to be. Or else you tell Him what a wonderful creature you think you are, and seem to take for granted that He will be only too pleased to help you. Or else you do not pray at all; you only mumble a few words which do not reach farther than your bed-posts. Be honest with yourself, and do not try to be otherwise. God is a just God, of great intelligence and of wisdom and knowledge. He has heard many prayers, and knows a real prayer from a make-believe. Pray hard; pray with the whole fervour of your real being in your thoughts. Tell God what you want, clearly; tell Him in what you think you can be helped; tell Him that you can or cannot do certain things. Tell Him you are lazy or a liar, or that you would like to commit murder. He would like to hear you express all that is in your mind. Be frank and open in expression: your prayers tell God your very soul. Ask God for love, and have faith with love. Love God beyond all else. He is your staff; in Him is all strength. By faith your days on earth will be lengthened, your life made happy; sorrow and disease will be washed away; your faith, indeed, will make you whole.

Your Father is your friend, in Him put all trust. Do not say over a prayer that has been taught you, be original in your prayer-thought. Tell God in your own language what you need, tell him that you wish to do a work, and tell Him that you need power and inspiration to do it.

Do not ask God to do it for you, but ask Him to show you His way, as perhaps your way has not been right. Seek to understand, and be not weary in asking that the way may be made clear for you.

You must know what you want to do before you make your demand. Perhaps failures have come; but if you have faith, failures will cease to come. Pray God to make you a good man, to teach you how to love and to live, and that whatsoever cometh, cometh for good—adversity or prosperity, pleasure or pain—as it is good for you and you need it. Some rain must come into the lives of men as into the lives of flowers, to make them more beautiful—more real. The inspirations of artists and musicians have come, not from pleasures, but from a combination of forces; and, in the language of their art, they are telling God what they are doing. The highest forms of art, like the highest forms of emotion and of love into which the soul is put, are prayer.

Tell God that you wish to do better, and so to give you greater tasks that you may the more fully prove your worth, and say: "Help me, O God my Father, to draw nearer to you and to others of your children. Take from me mental strife and condemnation, relieve me of all wrong thought, bring me into the light of day, that the sunlight of your divine love may so shine in my soul that its light may be a torch for my brothers. Make me sincere, make me serene, do not allow outward troubles to touch my soul; keep me in truth, dear Lord; take from me, if necessary, all earthly possessions, but give me your love. Show me the way to be with you, dear Lord; make me to realise that I have a part of you in my soul. And create in my

innermost being a haven of rest and peace unto myself. Help me by my own power to have power over others for good. Show me in your divine love the way to heal myself of all ills, and to heal the ills of others. Make me more fully to realise that this flesh is only an outward tabernacle, and that when my new mantle clothes me that it may be full of beauty gained by service. Make me the means for greater service; in no world and in no conditions do I want rest when you need me, dear Lord, to work for you. Take from me all delusion of my own importance, as a man is only important in himself by the things that he does. I need work, O Lord; for I need unfoldment, and only by work is that unfoldment possible. Love me, dear Lord—I need love, very great love; take hold of my hand, and never let it go; show me the way to more complete control of myself; take from me pride; show me that in my outer self I have not sufficient strength. Create in me, dear God, your love—the love that is born of the universe. Bring me to the fount of truth; show me all truths, as I want to learn. I want to know myself. Reveal me to myself. And I want you, Lord God, to write my name in the Book of Life. I want to hear your heavenly voice; I want you to make me patient and kindly, to drop from me all creeds, all dogmas, all so-called sciences that create a bar between me and my brother-man. Help me to grasp God, as God is all-powerful and real; and make me real. Help me to serve to the utmost of my ability, and in the glory of your love; help me to build more perfectly your world. Show me the secret place of the Most High God; give to me wisdom and understanding, and greater ambition; inspire me with your

grace; give me prophecy, that I may aid my brothers. Comfort me with the divine assurance that there is hope for me; help me to know that things are not real, but that thoughts are real, love is real. Teach me to forgive and forget; erase from my heart all thought of revenge. Lay Thy healing hand upon my head, dear Lord, and in mercy relieve me. Hide me in the bosom of your great strength, and keep me from passions; chasten me in your ways, dear Lord, as your ways are better than mine. Try my soul with fire, and keep me from anger; make me meek and merciful, Father; teach me to love my enemies and to realise that when they do wrong it is ignorance, as it is ignorance in me when I do wrong and make others to suffer. Show me the way to escape the vulgar error of wrong thought, as it diminishes my place with you, dear God. Make me humble at your feet, make me humiliate my very soul, but teach me truths; teach me to feel my own worth as a child of God and as joint heir to the kingdom of His divine love. Take from me the thought to judge others; but you judge me, Lord God. Rebuke the pride of the flesh, make me proud only of your love, and lead me higher and higher. Place me upon a rock so that nothing can do me harm, because I am covered by your infinite love.

"Our Father, which art in heaven, make our souls to receive Thee, Father, in our hearts.

"Hallowed be Thy name, which by love has been made sacred.

"Thy kingdom come, and let thy Throne be established in the hearts of men.

"Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven, by those

who have attained understanding and are living in Thy light.

"Give us this day our daily bread, to nourish our body-soul.

"And forgive us our debts which we have incurred, as we forgive our debtors and those who have striven against us.

"And lead us not into temptation, for tempters are near.

"But deliver us from evil, from the dark unwholesomeness of our being, and place us in Thy kingdom.

"And let Thy power and Thy glory reign for ever in our hearts and among all men, and let the spirits of just men, made perfect by the power of God, hover near the troubled world and restore it, and bring comfort to the wounded and broken of the world, who, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, are offering up their physical bodies to be tortured and mutilated for the salvation of their country. O God! bring about a spirit of fellowship throughout all lands: level all ranks, and destroy all creeds that do harm to the world, and forget and forgive the imperfections of the children of the Nations, and bring them near to the Throne of God and His ministering angels, and help them to realise the power and beauty of their being and its relationship with God, and that a new heaven and a new earth are at hand, for the first heaven and the first earth have passed away, and there *is* no more sea. 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed is *death*.'"

THE END.